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THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 67/NO. 7 MARCH 10, 2003

INSIDE

Workers in New Jersey join Róger Calero fight

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U.S. aims 125,000 troops at Iraq, boosts Korea forces

Conflicts intensify between Washington, and Paris and Berlin

BY PETER THIERJUNG AND PATRICK O'NEILL

The deployment of the 101st Airborne regiment to the Arab-Persian Gulf, along with a fifth aircraft carrier, will give Washington the troop strength and firepower to get its assault on Iraq off to a "rolling start" at any time, say U.S. officials.

"We could go today if somebody told us to," a defense department official told the February 7 *Washington Post*.

Set up for air-based attack, the 15,000 troops of the 101st will bring the total number of U.S. troops poised to attack in Kuwait and elsewhere in the Gulf to 125,000 and rapidly rising. In addition, the United Kingdom and Australia are deploying 42,000 and 2,000 troops, respectively.

Aiming to bring their weight to bear as part of the coming assault, the rival powers of France and Germany have continued to try to assert their own imperialist interests.

The resulting clashes between U.S. officials and those from Berlin and Paris intensified over the last week.

The sharpest exchanges came as the two governments rejected a Washington proposal that the NATO military alliance pro-

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U.S. soldier carries grenade launcher at Camp Coyote in Kuwait. Washington has stationed 125,000 troops in the Arab-Persian Gulf as it accelerates toward war.

U.S. reinforcements head to Korea

BY SAM MANUEL

As Washington steps up its military threats against the north Korean workers state, U.S. defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld has ordered the U.S. Air Force to send 12 B-52 and 12 B-1 bombers to Guam, putting a substantially expanded, nuclear-capable strike force within range of north Korea. He is "also considering sending additional warships and tactical fighters to the region," reported ABC News on February 3.

Washington continues to press its pro-

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Women's platoon is saluted at book fair in Havana

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL AND ARRIN HAWKINS

HAVANA—"This book shows why Teté is an example for young people—both women and men. It shows what a revolutionary is," said Brig. Gen. Harry Villegas at the launching here of *Marianas in Combat*: *Teté Puebla and the Mariana Grajales Women's Platoon in Cuba's Revolutionary War, 1956-58*. The book was recently published by Pathfinder Press in both English and Spanish.

A second Pathfinder title, *October 1962*: *The 'Missile' Crisis as Seen from Cuba* by Tomás Diez Acosta, was also presented at the February 3 event. The meeting, organized as part of the 11-day-long Havana International Book Fair, drew nearly 100 people.

In addition to Villegas, speakers included Brig. Gen. Delsa Esther "Teté" Puebla and Mary-Alice Waters, editor of *Marianas in Combat*. Introducing the book *October 1962* was Carlos Lechuga, who was appointed Cuba's ambassador to the United Nations during the decisive events described in the book. Iraida Aguirrechu, current affairs editor at the Cuban publishing house Editora Política, chaired the meeting. Editora Política publishes a Spanish edition of the book by Diez Acosta.

Joining the platform were Vilma Espín, president of the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC) and a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of

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Coming in March

New International **no. 12**

CAPITALISM'S LONG HOT WINTER HAS BEGUN

by Jack Barnes

"For the first time since the opening of the depression-ridden, war-ridden 1930s, all the evidence in the advanced capitalist countries points to the onset of something much more than a deep recession such as the three we've seen the past quarter century. What we're seeing today are the symptoms of a debt-deflation deadness that does not respond to the monetary or fiscal prodding that helps accelerate an upturn in a normal trade cycle. In short, we're in the opening stages of a world depression....

"One of capitalism's infrequent long winters has begun. Given the accompanying acceleration of imperialism's drive toward war, it's going to be a long, hot winter. And, even more important, one that will slowly but surely and explosively breed a scope and depth of resistance not previously seen by the great majority of revolutionary-minded militants in today's world."

Jack Barnes
July 2002

Also in this issue ...

Two reports from the 1921 congress of the Communist International

- **V.I. Lenin: A Very Unstable Equilibrium**
- **Leon Trotsky: World Depression and the Tasks of Communists**

Available in March at a Pathfinder Bookstore listed on page 12 or at www.pathfinderpress.com

Venezuela: working people force bosses to halt 'strike'

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

MIAMI—"We are now stronger to fight for land, to fight for the majority" following the failure of the Venezuelan bosses' three-month "strike," said Armando Serpa on February 6.

The comments by the peasant and fighter for land rights were echoed by others the *Militant* spoke to as news accumulated that the two-month antigovernment stoppage had "crumbled," in the words of the Associated Press. "Workers in all industries" except oil have "returned to their jobs," noted the February 4 AP report, while production in the oil fields and refineries has risen significantly. The opposition coalition formally called off the "strike" February 4 in all sectors except oil.

The strike was "more like a lockout," said Yhonny García, a unionist in Maracaibo, in a phone interview with the *Militant* the same day. García is a member of the Bolivarian Workers Force union federation, which supports the government of Hugo Chávez. He lives in Maracaibo, capi-

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Striking firefighters march in Scotland

BY REBECCA HUTCHINSON

GLASGOW, Scotland—Up to 5,000 firefighters and their supporters marched through the center of Glasgow on February 1. The march was called by the Scottish Trades Union Congress to show solidarity with the demand by the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) for a 40 percent wage increase and with its opposition to proposed cuts in the fire service.

The march took place on the first day of a 48-hour strike by firefighters. The big majority of participants were firefighters from stations throughout Scotland and from other parts of the United Kingdom

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Government plans new legislation attacking workers' rights 3

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U.S. reinforcements target north Korea

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paganda campaign against the government in the north, officially known as the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK). In the latest round of slanders, U.S. officials have speculated that the northern government will sell the plutonium byproducts of its just-restarted nuclear power plant at Yongbyon to "terrorists."

The government of north Korea has responded to Washington's increase in military and economic pressure by restating its determination to defend itself if it comes under attack.

It has also explained that the Yongbyon reactor will provide a much needed source of electrical power. Speaking to the *Guardian* newspaper published February 6, Ri Pyong-Gap, the deputy director of the Foreign Ministry of north Korea, said that "faced with Washington's cutoff of oil, the nuclear plant at Yongbyon is being restarted to meet the country's electricity needs.

"Our nuclear activities will be confined only to producing electricity," Ri emphasized.

He warned Washington that any attack on the Yongbyon nuclear plant would be considered "an act of war." U.S. officials have publicly discussed launching an air strike against the plant at the same time as bolstering their forces around the peninsula.

The U.S. reinforcements involve ground and sea forces as well as aircraft. Some 2,000 U.S. troops will join the 37,000 already in south Korea. The commander of U.S. forces in the south also announced that 2,900 U.S. soldiers might be held past their tours of duty to ensure that all units remained "at 100 percent strength."

On February 6 the aircraft carrier USS *Carl Vinson* was ordered to the Western Pacific as the *Kitty Hawk*, previously stationed there, set sail for the Gulf to join preparations for the assault on Iraq.

U.S. officials have kept up a barrage of accusations that the DPRK government is developing nuclear weapons. In testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage charged that the north not only wants to sell plutonium produced by the Yongbyon reactor to "terrorists," but would be able to build several nuclear weapons within months.

Asserting that north Korea already has a handful of such bombs, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld slandered Pyongyang as a "terrorist regime...a regime that has been involved in things that are harmful to other countries."

Administration officials have said that at the next meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency they will push to place north Korea's action in restarting the plant before the United Nations Security Council. That body, in which Washington plays a dominant part, has the authority to declare further economic measures.

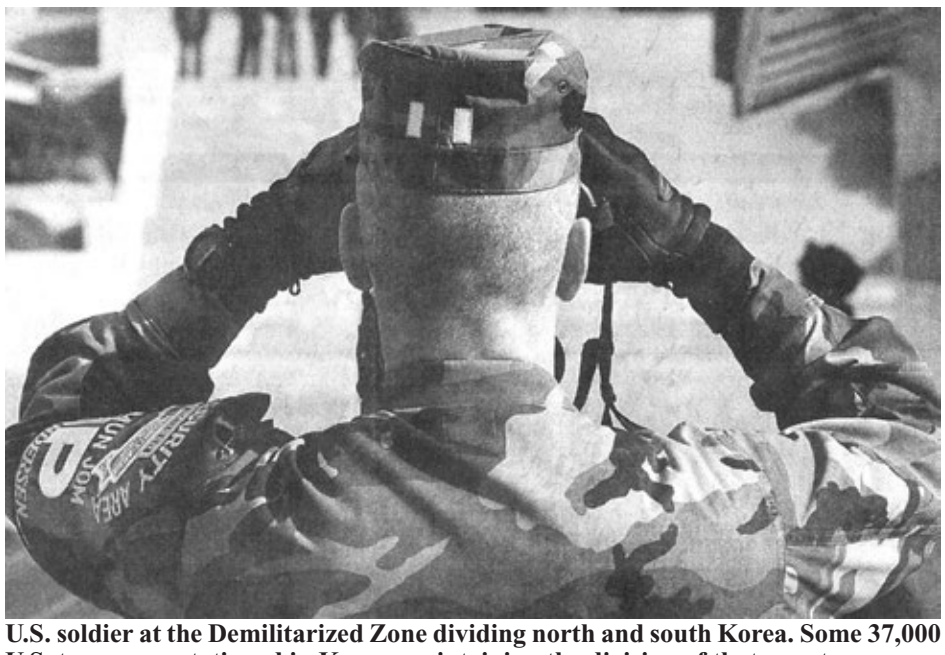
On February 5 the DPRK government said that Washington would be making a "big miscalculation" if it thought that north Korea would be frightened by sanctions.

While presenting itself as in favor of dialogue, Washington continues to insist that such "direct talks" involve a combination of Russia, China, South Korea, and Japan.

North Korea says that the administration is attempting to "evade its responsibility" for the crisis and to "create an atmosphere of international pressure" on Pyongyang.

Cutoff of fuel and food supplies

The escalation of Washington's hostile acts and statements against north Korea followed accusations by U.S. officials that Pyongyang was pursuing a program to develop a nuclear arsenal. Late last year Washington cut off fuel oil supplies to the north. Tokyo and Seoul followed suit. The actions led directly to the restart of the Yongbyon reactor.



U.S. soldier at the Demilitarized Zone dividing north and south Korea. Some 37,000 U.S. troops are stationed in Korea, maintaining the division of that country.

The U.S. government also led the way in the cancellation of food shipments. United Nations officials organizing this aid have warned that 80,000 tons are needed on an emergency basis as part of a total yearly quota of 512,000 tons.

South Korea has also halted food shipments. The government proposes to deal with a rice surplus of 150,000 metric tons by lowering the price paid to farmers.

Officials in the World Food Program have also noted that the DPRK has just chalked up its "second consecutive year of reasonably good harvests." The improved results "will help underpin the advances made in food security at the national level," said a UN report, since the very low harvests of 1996–1998 and 2000–01. Food shortages remain in the north and northeast, however.

In the face of Pyongyang's evident refusal to cave in before U.S. demands that it weaken its own defenses, including by moving troops back from the DMZ, some voices in U.S. politics criticize the Bush administration for its military focus on Iraq.

Such minority voices repeat the administration's slander that north Korea has an aggressive stance in the region.

A February 5 editorial in the pro-Democratic Party *New York Times* claimed that the north's alleged weapons program is "rapidly advancing," and described it as the "most urgent threat facing America today."

50 years of U.S. aggression against Korea

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

In a State of the Union address that ended with a de facto call to arms against Iraq, U.S. president George Bush also took aim at the government of the north Korean workers state. "On the Korean peninsula, an oppressive regime rules a people living in fear and starvation," he said to Congress on January 28.

The north's alleged "nuclear program... will bring only isolation, economic stagnation, and continued hardship," said Bush. In recent weeks his administration has been as good as its threats, reinforcing its air, ground, and naval strength around the Korean peninsula, and maintaining the cutoff of promised shipments of fuel and food. U.S. officials and media have kept up a constant barrage of propaganda depicting the north as a potential aggressor against south Korea, Japan, and even the United States itself.

Bush's war speech did not mark a new departure in U.S. policy toward north Korea. Nor are the latest moves a response to a specific nuclear threat. In fact, for five decades the U.S. rulers have worked hard to impose "isolation, economic stagnation, and continued hardship" on the working people of the north—not to mention constant military pressure and threats of aggression.

Since the end of the Korean War tens of thousands of heavily armed U.S. troops have been stationed at the Demilitarized Zone and at dozens of other military installations in south Korea—in spite of frequent waves of protest against their presence. Another 48,000 are based in Japan.

These forces, totaling at least 85,000 men and women under arms, are backed up by the nuclear-armed U.S. Seventh Fleet.

Each year the U.S. forces combine with units of the 650,000-strong south Korean army, which would come under U.S. command in the event of a war, in holding large-scale exercises targeting the north.

On the economic front, the U.S. government imposed sanctions on north Korea in 1950, authorized under the Trading with the Enemy Act. The sanctions were slightly eased in June 2000, but all exports and imports require express approval by the U.S. government. Now Washington is threatening to impose new sanctions through the United Nations Security Council.

Revolution in Korea

The roots of the relentless hostility of the super-rich U.S. ruling class toward north Korea lie in the revolutionary struggles of working people across the peninsula during and after World War II. Workers and peasants used the opening provided by the war to rise up against the Japanese colonial power, which had occupied the country during wars against China and tsarist Russia beginning in 1894.

Japan's formal annexation of Korea in 1910 had received Washington's tacit blessing.

Meeting at Yalta in February 1945, representatives of the Soviet Union and the United States, the two major powers allied in the war against Japan, agreed to divide Korea at the 38th parallel. Before Soviet

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THE MILITANT

The Irish fight against British occupation

For three decades fighters for an independent and united Ireland have demanded justice for Bloody Sunday—the killing of 14 civil rights marchers by British troops. The 'Militant' backs the Irish freedom struggle and the worldwide fight of workers and farmers against imperialist domination.

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U.S. sets up 'rolling start' to assault on Iraq

Continued from front page

vide missile defense assistance to Turkey. Rumsfeld called the refusal "shameful." One way or another, he said, "Turkey will not be hurt." If NATO continues to stall, he emphasized, "the United States will go right ahead and do it."

NATO secretary general Lord Robertson quickly invoked Article IV of the military pact, a clause forcing a consultation on the dispute.

The two European rivals of Washington have also drawn up a plan for "blue-helmeted" United Nations occupation troops to be installed in Iraq as an extension of longer-term "arms inspections." U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell called this "a diversion, not a solution."

According to *Die Welt,* the plan would make all of Iraq a "no-fly zone." Thousands of UN troops would be sent to Iraq for several years as part of a "robust inspection regime," the German paper said. Berlin would supply troops as part of the UN force, while Paris would provide spy planes to assist the weapons "inspectors."

In response to Rumsfeld's jibes during the annual international "security conference" in Munich, German foreign minister Joshka Fisher recited a list of his country's military interventions abroad, from Kosova and Macedonia to Afghanistan, where German troops now number 3,000. A German general took over joint command of the foreign forces there on February 10.

Rumsfeld has repeatedly contrasted the stance of the "Old Europe" of France and Germany with that of London and the 17 other states largely in Eastern and southern Europe that have declared less reserved support for the U.S.-led course.

French carrier heads toward Gulf

Even as the political clashes escalated Paris's only aircraft carrier set sail for "exercises" near the Gulf. The French air force has been refitting planes with satellite bomb guidance equipment to help them coordinate with U.S. forces more easily.

Opinion columnists in the U.S. big-business press have noted the extent of the tensions between Washington and its European rivals. Referring to the 18 European countries that have backed Washington's stand in the Middle East, the *New York Times's* William Safire wrote gleefully that "the notion that Paris and Berlin could take charge of a 'common foreign policy' for all of Europe turns out to be pipe-dreaming by presumptuous bureaucrats."

Thomas Friedman, another *Times* columnist who, unlike Safire, takes a liberal stand, recommended that Paris be removed from its position as a veto-bearing permanent member of the Security Council.

"I would certainly vote France off the Council and replace it with India," he wrote. "Then the perm-five would be Russia, China, India, Britain and the United States. That's more like it.

"France is so caught up with its need to differentiate itself from America...it's become silly," claimed Friedman.

Turkish parliament okays U.S. troops

The dispute around providing missile defenses to Turkey remains a source of growing friction. Iraq's northern neighbor will be, along with Kuwait, the staging post for the imperialist ground invasion.

On February 6 the Turkish parliament gave Washington the go-ahead to station tens of thousands of troops in the southeast.

The Turkish newspaper *Hurriyet* said that the government has asked for $14 billion in U.S. aid. Prime Minister Abdullah Gul also proposed that Turkish troops occupy northern Iraq behind advancing U.S. troops.

Turkish officials say they aim to stop an influx of refugees like the one that occurred during the first Gulf War. The troops would serve as an armed warning to the Kurdish people of the area, who have a long history of fighting for an independent state in spite of repression by Turkish and other governments in the region (see article page 7.)

Meanwhile, liberal voices like the *New York Times* have hailed the speech by Colin Powell to the UN Security Council in which he presented "evidence" of Iraq's alleged duplicity over its weapons stocks. The *Times* editors called the presentation "compelling."

Other liberals have come on board the war train, noted veteran *Times* staff writer William Keller on February 8. "The president will take us to war with support—often, I admit, equivocal and patronizing in tone—from quite a few members of the East Coast liberal media cabal," he wrote. "The I-Can't-Believe-I'm-a-Hawk Club includes op-ed regulars at this newspaper and *The Washington Post*, the editors of *The New Yorker*, *The New Republic* and *Slate* [and] columnists in *Time* and *Newsweek*."

Turkish soldier stands guard on Iraq border. U.S. officials have met opposition from France and Germany to their push for NATO to assist Turkey with missile-defenses.

'Patriot Act II' would further attack rights

BY SAM MANUEL

New legislation being drafted by Attorney General John Ashcroft's staff seeks to extend the government's assault on democratic rights and civil liberties codified in the U.S.A. Patriot Act. The draft legislation, known as 'Patriot Act II' by Washington insiders, has been under discussion for a few months, according to the Center For Public Integrity, which has posted it on its web site. The draft is entitled the Domestic Security Enhancement Act of 2003.

The draft law would strengthen the ability of the Justice Department to refuse to release information requested under the Freedom of Information Act about individuals detained in connection with "terrorism investigations." Following the September 11, 2001, attack on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, the government asserted its right to detain thousands of immigrants, mostly from the Middle East, without revealing their names or the charges against them.

It would allow the Justice Department to conduct "clandestine searches" and wiretaps against anyone it designates as a "terrorist" or "foreign agent" for 15 days after the beginning of a military conflict or "national emergency." It would extend the time the department would be allowed to conduct a wiretap with less oversight by judges against U.S. citizens in so-called terrorism cases.

The draft proposes to terminate all state consent decrees before September 11, 2001, not related to racial profiling or other civil rights violations that limit state agencies from gathering information about individuals and organizations.

In the wake of the Patriot Act's passage following September 11, several cop jurisdictions have gone to court seeking to overturn such consent decrees won in the 1970s and 1980s.

Under one provision of the draft, the government could also declare "individuals," not just groups or organizations, as "foreign powers," making them subject to surveillance under looser standards than apply in criminal cases. The same provision would authorize the department to conduct surveillance against U.S. citizens who the government says it suspects of spying for a foreign power, even if the activity is not criminal.

Another provision harkens to the case of John Walker Lindh, who was charged with providing military service to the Taliban forces in Afghanistan. It establishes that service in an "enemy" army constitutes "intent to renounce citizenship." It also states that citizenship could be revoked if a person joins or gives material support to a group designated "terrorist" with the "intent" of renouncing citizenship. Under the draft law, "intent" would be inferred by the individual's conduct, making it easier to strip U.S. citizens of their citizenship. The current law requires the individual to state their intent to renounce citizenship.

On another front the attorney general also stepped up the drive to make wider use of the death penalty. Ashcroft recently overruled the recommendations of U.S. attorneys not to seek the death penalty in 10 cases in New York and two in Connecticut. In one case the defendant had already obtained the agreement of prosecutors not to seek the death penalty in exchange for his testimony in the case. In another the defendant is mentally retarded according to his attorneys and is ineligible for the death penalty.

Marchers in Swedish town protest deportation of Chechen family

Militant/Lawrence Morgan

More than 100 people protested in Filipstad, Sweden, February 1 against the Swedish immigration board's decision to deport a family from Chechnya. "Let them stay, let them live," protesters chanted as they marched. Several speakers from churches and charity organizations addressed the protest, along with a member of parliament from the ruling Social Democratic Party. Lawrence Morgan, representing the Róger Calero Defense Committee, also spoke, expressing solidarity and describing his tour in Europe, during which he has spread the news of Calero's fight in the United States against deportation. "I will tell people I meet about your fight," Morgan said. The local *Filipstad tidning* newspaper covered the action and mentioned Morgan's greetings.

New York delivery workers win entitlement to minimum wage

BY PETER THIERJUNG

A New York federal district court judge ruled that deliverymen for the Duane Reade drug store chain here are entitled to the federal minimum wage of $5.15 an hour. Deliverymen are among the lowest-paid workers in New York City, reported the *New York Times.* They have accused Duane Reade, along with Gristedes and Food Emporium supermarkets, of violating the minimum-wage law.

The January 28 ruling covers 200 workers, mostly immigrants born in West Africa. Duane Reade attorneys argued the workers were not employees of the company, but were employed by subcontractors.

The judge's ruling noted that while Duane Reade had paid $50 to $60 a day to two subcontractors for each worker, the subcontractors paid the deliverymen less than $3 an hour. The company cannot use outsourcing to evade "obligations under the Fair Labor Standards Act," the judge said.

Meanwhile the Economic Policy Institute reported the value of the minimum wage in 2002 was 19 percent lower than in 1981. The report said that families with incomes of $25,000 or less were dependent on workers earning minimum wage for 76 percent of their total weekly income.

Working full-time for the minimum wage, a worker earns $10,712 per year. The official poverty line for a family of four is $17,603. Some 68 percent of workers earning the minimum wage are adults; 42 percent work full time; 61 percent are women; and about a third are Black or Hispanic. These facts contrast sharply with the image painted in the media of workers earning minimum wage as teenage part-timers working to supplement their pocket money.

Democrats submitted legislation to Congress during the last session which would increase the minimum wage to $6.65 over 18 months. The increase would still leave the minimum wage with less purchasing power than it had in 1981.

Republicans countered with a proposal for a $1 raise over three years, with provisions to allow states to opt out of the law.

The Fair Labor Standards Act establishing the minimum wage was passed in 1938. The law does not include provisions to raise the minimum wage to match living cost increases. Raises require a new act of Congress signed by the president. The last increases occurred in 1996 and 1997, when the level went from $4.25 to $5.15.

Mexican farmers defend right to farm

BY ROLLANDE GIRARD

SAN FRANCISCO—Tens of thousands of peasants, farm workers and their supporters marched in Mexico City on January 31 to demand the Mexican government renegotiate the agricultural clause of NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement. Coffee, bean, sugar cane, and other producers came in buses and trucks from all over the country. Some brought their tractors and horses.

The march was sponsored by El Campo no Aguanta Más (the countryside can't bear it any more), El Barzón, and the Permanent Agrarian Congress (CAP). The National Union of Workers and the Association of Rural Organizations of Women also endorsed it.

This was the largest to date of the protests that began last year against the 2003 extension of NAFTA provisions removing tariff protection on 20 Mexican agricultural crops and farm products, including wheat, rice, potatoes, and coffee.

Sara de los Reyes Pérez, a peasant from Tapachula, in the state of Chiapas, told the press that "the products that we sell are worth less every day. To the contrary, when we come here and we want to buy a cup of coffee, it sells for 7 pesos. Over there [in Chiapas] we sell it at 2 pesos a kilo" (1 peso = US$.9 cents).

Raúl Godinez, also from Tapachula, said that "in coming into Mexico, all the big foreign companies take over our land, they offer us a salary as workers which we will accept, because we will have nothing else. We are here because we need subsidies in order to not lose the land."

"The land is my life and now I have nothing. I want to work but without money, the animals die and the land goes dry," said Tranquilino Galván Rodríguez, from Querétaro.

NAFTA first went into effect in 1994. While the signatory governments touted the agreement as a boon to the economies of Canada, Mexico, and the United States, the implementation of this trade pact by imperialist Ottawa and Washington—especially the latter—is making it increasingly difficult for Mexican peasants to survive on the land.

Goods can be produced more cheaply in the United States using advanced agricultural techniques. Small farmers in Mexico are unable to get a competitive price for their products and are forced off the land. One of the main demands of those protesting in the capital city at the end of January was for increased subsidies from the government that will enable them to resist this assault.

The Mexican government estimates that between 1990 and 2000 farm employment in Mexico was reduced by 1.2 million farm jobs. Thirty percent of the population in the countryside lives under the poverty level today, more than double the national figure of 13.5 percent. The World Bank and the United Nations officials set the poverty level at an income of $1 a day per person.

Peasants march in Mexico City January 31 to demand government assistance in "order not to lose the land."

Rise in protests by working people

The protests by small farmers and farm workers have been building since the beginning of December, including incidents where farmers have blocked the roads to trucks carrying farm products from the United States into Mexico.

Seeking to undercut the protests, Mexican president Vicente Fox has called "for the launching of a great engagement of the Mexican state with the countryside and the rural communities." He invited the organizations of agricultural producers, state governors, municipal authorities, and federal and state legislators together for a "dialogue" starting February 10. Fox said that his goal is to have an agreement by March 15.

Following the president's announcement, the agricultural producers' organizations announced on February 7 that they were suspending protests as proof of their goodwill in these negotiations. The suspension of protests will last until March 15, they say.

The Mexican government, however, has already rejected the farmers' main demand for a review of NAFTA agricultural conditions, claiming that the agreement offers opportunities to producers.

"Today we sell more than we buy from our NAFTA partners," Fox said. "Every year we sell to the United States 30 billion dollars more than what they sell to us."

To bolster his claim the president cited statistics showing that Mexico exports 157 agricultural products to the United States, including two out of every three mangos consumed there, two of every three papayas, one of three eggplants, 60 percent of broccoli and cauliflower, and 25 percent of peppers.

Fox: 'raise productivity'

The Mexican producers need to raise their productivity in order to compete, Fox said. The Mexican government stated that they grow only 14 percent as much food and fiber as farmers in the United States.

The increased influx of farmers and farm workers into the United States is a manifestation of the dislocation affecting the Mexican countryside. The Mexican government has pressed Washington for a new agreement on immigration without success.

"The long-term answer for the migration issue is to work in a way that encourages commerce on both sides of the border so people can find jobs here in Mexico," stated U.S. president George Bush in rejecting the proposal for a new pact, "to develop industry together in the midst of Mexico, in the south of Mexico, so that people are more likely to find work at home."

Recently U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell floated the idea of a guest-worker program. In the past such schemes have guaranteed a supply of cheap Mexican labor, on short-term contracts, to agricultural capitalists in the United States.

Rollande Girard is a sewing machine operator in San Francisco.

German coalition gov't loses in state ballots

BY PAUL PEDERSON

Voters in two German states handed the ruling Social Democratic Party a "bitter defeat" in February 3 elections, in the words of Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, who is the party's leader. The SDP lost to the former ruling Christian Democratic Union (CDU) in both Lower Saxony, which it had formerly governed, and Hesse.

The CDU received around 48 percent of the vote in both ballots—an increase over its tallies in the previous elections of 12 percent in Lower Saxony and 5 percent in Hesse. The SDP took only 33 percent of the vote in Lower Saxony—a 14 percent decline. They also slipped further behind in the CDU-controlled state of Hesse, where their 29 percent tally registered a 10 percent decrease over last time.

The results strengthen the CDU majority in the Bundesrat, or upper house of parliament.

The elections took place in the context of a continuing crisis in Europe's largest economy. In January Germany's jobless rate topped 11 percent, as the ranks of the unemployed swelled to 4.6 million—the most since Schröder was elected in 1998 and the highest unemployment rate in the European Union (EU) after Spain.

In response to the election result, commentators in the big-business press of both the United States and Europe have repeated their constant theme in face of the ongoing German economic crisis: the government, they say, should cut state spending on a range of social entitlements and get rid of basic protections won by workers.

Citing financial and political figures, the New York Times' Frankfurt correspondent wrote that the setback for Schröder "might liberate his government, at long last, to undertake a wholesale reform of Germany's hidebound economy.... Any effort to reform the economy, experts say, must begin with Germany's labor laws and its welfare system."

Speaking of a "confrontation" with the unions, Martin Hüfner, the chief economist at Hypovereinsbank in Munich, predicted that "the social climate will be a lot rougher in the next few years."

Schröder's minister of economics and labor, Wolfgang Clement, who was appointed at the time of the government's reelection last year, has said that he will make it easier for bosses to fire workers, and has announced a plan to slash jobless benefits.

Treating laid-off workers as scapegoats for unemployment, government officials have touted the measures as a weapon against unemployment. The proposals include the cutting of benefits after three years if unemployed workers do not accept the jobs they are offered; the conversion of the offices that currently distribute benefits into "job placement agencies;" and the allotment of subsidies to employers who hire workers into low-wage jobs.

The plan's outline was drafted by a government commission headed by Peter Hartz, a member of the board of directors of the auto giant Volkswagen.

Clement's "reform" includes the push for a more "flexible labor market"—a catch phrase for measures aimed at weakening union power, reducing job security, and giving employers a freer hand to fire and hire workers.

Germany's weight within Europe

Germany accounts for more than one-third of the eurozone's economic activity. Shifts in its economy have a significant impact in the entire region.

When the government announced in January that the federal budget deficit had risen to 3.75 percent of Gross Domestic Product, exceeding the EU limit of 3 percent, it prompted a sharp exchange between the EU administrative body in Brussels and Berlin.

The EU's economic commissioner Pedro Solbes said that the problems in the world economy are not the only factors to blame for Germany's economic woes. Solbes called for "far-reaching structural reforms to raise Germany's very low growth potential."

While agreeing with Solbes, Clement pointed out at a January 7 news conference that there is another factor propelling the country's economic woes. According to the Associated Press, the German minister said, "The [EU] commission also had to take into account the enormous sums still being spent to bring the former communist East Germany up to western levels."

Just over a decade ago the rulers of Germany were confident that the country's reunification would reinforce and expand its economic strength and political weight. The opposite has happened. Berlin has poured hundreds of billions of dollars into the east in the last 13 years. Far from becoming profit-returning capitalist investment, most of these funds have gone to pay for unemployment benefits and other social programs.

Union struggles have helped place ob-

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New York City government moves to limit access to homeless shelters

BY SAM MANUEL

NEWYORK—As the number of people unable to afford housing rises in New York, the city government has taken steps to weaken its legal obligations to provide shelter for the homeless.

The moves come as the number of homeless families in New York is growing by 25 percent a year, with working people squeezed between rising unemployment and soaring rents. An average of 38,000 people were sleeping in city shelters at the end of last year, while there are 9,000 families categorized as homeless. Up to September the number of individuals in homeless families had increased by 10,000 since 1998. "Legions more" sleep on the streets, according to *Newsday.*

On January 17 city lawyers filed motions in court that would allow the eviction of single adults from shelters for up to 30 days if they violate the rules or procedures. Authorities also want the power to evict single adults who they decide are not cooperating with social service agencies. The "non-cooperation," reported the *New York Times,* includes the failure to comply with plans drawn up by city social workers, including medication regimes or "job search strategies."

The city government has also declared its intention of repealing the 1981 Callahan consent decree that guarantees single homeless adults the right to shelter.

One official claimed that nonresidents of the city were swelling the city's shelter population and putting a strain on resources. The shelter system "is not there to help people relocate to the city," said James Anderson, a spokesman for the Department of Homeless Services.

The comment was reported in a January 10 New York *Sun* article entitled, "Out-of-Towners Packing City Homeless Shelters." One six families seeking a roof over their heads is a "recent arrival from out of town, out of state, or event out of the country," it claimed, asserting that "out-of-towners are among some 9,100 families, mostly women with young children, packed into a jury-rigged system of temporary shelters and rented apartments."

An out-of-court decision will allow the authorities to toss families out of shelters if they refuse placement in permanent housing units offered by the city. The deal, worked out between city lawyers and the Legal Aid Society, requires the city to keep open an offer of similar housing of its choice.

Last summer city authorities sparked outrage when they used a former Bronx jail as a shelter. Officials have also considered using mothballed cruise ships as housing for the homeless.

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Boost in U.S. AIDS funding to Africa has strings attached

BY PETER THIERJUNG

Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Swaziland, and Malawi—four countries with some of the highest AIDS rates in the world—are among the majority of sub-Saharan African countries that will not see a dime from the $15 billion scheme announced by President George Bush in his January 28 State of the Union address. Around $5 billion of the amount is already part of previous budgets.

Called the "Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief," the funds are directed toward Africa at the same time as Washington is deepening its investment in the continent's oil resources and other natural wealth, and has placed troops in Djibouti and the Ivory Coast.

Bush painted the infusion as a unique humanitarian gesture. "Seldom has history offered a greater opportunity to do so much for so many," he said, adding that "this nation can lead the world in sparing innocent people from a plague of nature."

A number of officials and activists involved in different anti-AIDS programs hailed the announcement. Writing in the February 5 *Washington Post*, columnist Michael Kelly added his voice to the praise. At the same time, he noted that "until now, the response by the United States to this holocaust has been scandalous."

The Clinton administration, Kelly noted, was particularly concerned with defending the profits of the U.S. drug companies. In 1999, he recalled, "Vice-president Gore led a determined administration effort, at the behest of the big-walleted American pharmaceuticals, to stop African nations from doing the one most effective thing to slow the slaughter: producing or buying low-cost generic versions of the expensive drug treatments that had vastly reduced the number of U.S. AIDS deaths."

As late as November 2002 of last year, the Bush administration also attempted to thwart the production and distribution of generic drugs. It shifted its stance as African countries expressed outrage.

All the same, Leon Spencer, the executive director of the Washington Office on Africa, said in response to the proposal, "There are no grounds to trust this administration if a choice must be made between drug patents and African lives."

Proposal's fine print

Taking a closer look at the initiative, the Boston *Globe* reported January 30 that 90 percent of the funds will go to projects directly administered by U.S. agencies.

Bush's initiative "could turn out to be a cruel joke," Salih Booker, the executive director of Africa Action—a Washington-based lobby group—told the press. "Not only doesn't it give any major new money in fiscal year 2003 and 2004, but it undermines the Global Fund as the main vehicle fighting AIDS."

The Global Fund is a United Nations body that announced January 30 that it is on the verge of going broke. Officials had lobbied for more than the $1 billion earmarked for the fund as part of the package.

Booker also criticized the slow release of the funds. The first $2 billion will not be made available until October if Congress approves the package, and the balance of $8 billion will be doled out over the following five years.

"One does not know what are the conditions of the money, or where it will be allocated," said South Africa's deputy president Jacob Zuma. "It has to take into account that countries like South Africa have specific programs.... If that aid fits into those programs, that would be accepted."

Twelve African countries—Botswana, Ivory Coast, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia—and Haiti and Guyana have been designated the targets of the U.S. plan.

Africa the epicenter of AIDS scourge

Today Africa is at the epicenter of the AIDS pandemic. The disease combines with conditions of labor and life that are an indictment of centuries of colonial plunder and imperialist exploitation.

Some 30 million of the world's 42 million people diagnosed with HIV or full-blown AIDS live on the continent. Africa—home to 10 percent of the world's population—accounts for nine out of 10 new cases of HIV infection.

More than 80 percent of the world's AIDS-related deaths have occurred there, leaving more than 13 million orphans in sub-Saharan Africa.

The health crisis has been aggravated by a famine that at the end of 2002 put some 14.4 million people at risk of starvation. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, some 7 million farm workers in 25 countries have died of the disease since 1985, and 16 million more could die in the next 20 years.

The loss of able-bodied heads of households and of money sent home by working family members, the challenge of caring for orphans, and the costs of health care and funerals have led people to leave the land to seek income elsewhere, with a serious impact on agricultural production.

In sub-Saharan Africa, women and girls working on the land produce 50–80 percent of food, yet they are the majority living with HIV and AIDS.

The World Bank reported that average per capita income in sub-Sahara Africa dropped to $474 in 2000 from $552 in 1991. Ethiopia has the lowest per capita income at $100, while Botswana had one of the highest at $3,300.

Washington's trade push into Africa

Washington's AIDS initiative comes alongside its push to increase its exploitation of African resources—a drive that is frequently given a "free trade" label, as under the African Growth and Opportunity Act put in place by the Clinton administration in 2000.

"The United States exported more to

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Marches in France defend retirement age

Militant/Derek Jeffers

Demonstrators in Paris defend retirement age and oppose government plans for "reform." Around 350,000 marchers took part in the February 1 protests, called by seven union federations, in more than 100 cities throughout France. Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin has pledged to modify the current system before summer. Working people anticipate that the government will try to raise the legal retirement age. Similar measures introduced by the government in 1995 led to massive strikes and demonstrations, forcing then–prime minister Alain Juppé to back down.

German ruling party loses ground in state elections

Continued from Page 4

stacles in the way of moves to slash these subsidies, with workers on both sides of the former Berlin Wall taking action to demand the equalization of wages and working conditions nationwide.

Such demands are boosted by the significant disparity that still exists between eastern and western Germany. In the eastern part of the country, for example, unemployment is currently almost 19 percent, nearly double the national average.

When 3 million public sector workers threatened to strike for a pay increase last month, one of the union's central demands was for equal wages for public sector workers in the east. The union eventually won a pay increase of 4.4 percent over 27 months. The government said that it would bring pay for public sector workers in eastern Germany to the same level as the west by 2009.

The metalworkers union has demanded equal pay for the same hours of work in a contract dispute covering some 300,000 workers in the auto, electrical, and mechanical engineering industries in three eastern states—Berlin, Brandenburg, and Saxony. Currently union members in the east work 38 hours to receive the equivalent of 35 hours in the west.

Martin Kannegiesser, the president of the employers' organization, complained about the demand. "The longer working week is the last competitive advantage the eastern German metalworking industry has," he said.

The German rulers have expressed fears that the U.S.-led war in Iraq will bring further problems for Germany. The government's annual economic report released in January warned that "a war would pose incalculable issues that cannot be taken into account in the annual forecasts." It added that it "could have lasting negative effects on international financial markets, oil prices, and consumer and business sentiment."

Germany fears to lose out

Germany's ruling families fear that the war, aside from reasserting U.S. predominance in the imperialist pecking order, will see them lose out in a postwar land- and oil-grab. An October 2002 report released by Deutche Bank—Germany's largest bank and the second largest in the world—stated, "If Saddam's government is replaced—as seems to be the priority for the Bush administration—and sanctions ease, then the corporate lineup in Iraq may well feature U.S. and UK companies, particularly if there has been a U.S.-driven war in the country."

Berlin continues to take an official stance of opposition to any immediate move to war, arguing that United Nations "inspections" should continue a while longer and that the UN Security Council should decide when to move. Schröder built his successful election campaign last year around a slogan of opposition to the U.S. course.

Meanwhile, Berlin is cooperating with Washington as it shifts troops between its bases in Germany—the command headquarters for its European troops—and the Middle East. German troops are providing security at the bases as U.S. forces—normally standing at 70,000—are reduced by the war buildup.

Nevertheless, the war of words between the two imperialist governments has, if anything, sharpened, with U.S. officials proving the aggressor on this front as well. On February 5 U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, who in January had referred to France and Germany as part of "old Europe," delivered another sideswipe at the European power.

Speaking before the House Armed Services Committee on February 5, Rumsfeld claimed that most governments were falling into line with Washington in the war drive with the exception of "Libya, Cuba, and Germany." His lumping together of the European imperialist power with the north African semicolonial country and the revolutionary workers state in the Caribbean—both of which have been the target of U.S. sanctions and military attack—caused immediate controversy in Germany.

"Germany is and remains a reliable alliance partner," said Klaus Naumann, the former chairman of NATO's military committee. "That's not the way to treat partners."

Antiwar protest leaders in Munich called demonstrations against Rumsfeld's visit there on February 7. "These comments of Rumsfeld should help bring more people out onto the street," said one organizer, described as a member of an antiglobalization group.

Although Rumsfeld struck a more conciliatory tone following the controversy, Richard Perle, an advisor to the Defense Department, hinted strongly that he would like to see the Schröder government replaced. "After the way the current government has treated the Untied States, repairing the damage in the near future is unlikely," he told the *Handelsblatt* business daily. "With a new government that would certainly be possible."

German soldiers participate in military exercise in Kuwait. Specialized German troops and tank crews are part of imperialist forces in Mideast, as government presses for voice through the United Nations on decision to go to war.

Workers in New Jersey join Calero fight

BY ANGEL LARISCY

NEWARK, New Jersey—"I came to learn more about this case and hear about people who want to fight," said Milton Valencia, a twenty-year-old Newark worker in meat packing, originally from Colombia. "We have got to learn how to fight for our rights. Now I want to get more involved," he said.

Valencia was one of more than 50 people who gathered in north Newark for a meeting demanding a halt to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) efforts to deport Róger Calero, a staff writer for the *Militant* newspaper and associate editor of *Perspectiva Mundial*. They included a number of workers, both U.S.-born and immigrant, along with activists involved in organizing protests against the U.S. government's harassment and deportation of immigrants.

The meeting was organized by New Jersey supporters of the Róger Calero Defense Committee.

INS agents detained and jailed Calero December 3 at the Houston Intercontinental Airport as he returned to the United States from a reporting trip, during which he had covered political meetings in Cuba and Mexico and a book fair in Mexico. The INS based Calero's arrest on his 1988 plea-bargain conviction on a charge of selling an ounce of marijuana to an undercover cop. Calero had informed the INS of this conviction when he successfully applied for permanent residency status in 1989; officials waived it again when his green card was renewed in 2000.

Calero was released from detention on December 13 after INS officials received dozens and dozens of protest letters about his case.

Ed Hernandez, the director of youth and family services at La Casa de Don Pedro, which donated its space for the event, welcomed everyone to the meeting. "We believe in assisting all those who are fighting for their rights," he said.

"Our philosophy is an attack on one of us is an attack on us all," said Larry Hamm, chairman of the People's Organization for Progress (POP), a Newark-based anti-police brutality group.

Hamm explained to the gathering that Calero had attended meetings of his organization before leaving for his reporting assignment. When POP activists had learned of Calero's arrest, he said, the group had "no question" that they needed to send a letter of protest right away. The POP recently had Calero address their meeting to update people on the case.

Militant/Margrethe Siem

Above, Róger Calero speaks to participants at February 9 meeting in Newark, New Jersey. Left to right at near table: Larry Hamm, Joe Fortunato, and Sarah Katz. Inset, Omar Arango, worker from Colombia, tells crowd about being inspired to wage fight against deportation after learning about Calero case.

Joe Fortunato, the state chair of the Green Party of New Jersey, told participants that at its last statewide meeting the party had issued a statement in solidarity with the Calero's fight. "This is an incredibly important case," especially because of the government's drive toward war, he said.

'Made me confident about my fight'

Other speakers included Omar Arango from Elizabeth, New Jersey, a truck driver who has been a U.S. resident for 22 years but now faces a deportation hearing in June. Calero's efforts to resist his deportation had "made me feel confident about my fight," Arango said. He had attended a similar public meeting in New York the week before, after reading about the case in the New York-based *Hoy* daily.

Subash Kateel of Families for Freedom, a New-York based immigrant rights organization, expressed the organization's solidarity and read from its statement of beliefs. The first paragraph of the statement reads, "We believe that human beings do not deserve imprisonment or life exile for seeking asylum, having a past criminal conviction, being undocumented, or being from a targeted country."

Chairperson Sarah Katz, who is a leader of the defense effort and Calero's wife, read from a letter of protest to the INS from Trenton city councilman at-large Manuel Segura.

Calero was introduced by Juan Espinosa, president of the United Corporation in Defense of Immigrants, who has been helping to win support for the Calero defense effort.

Reviewing the facts of his case, Calero noted, "Through the course of my national speaking tour, I have had the opportunity to join with others who are fighting back, refuse to be silenced and are standing up to the government."

The 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act, passed under the Clinton administration, is now being applied retroactively to people like himself, Calero explained.

The law expanded the list of offenses considered grounds for deportation and directs the INS to expel immigrant convicted of crimes, even if they are legal residents of the United States.

"In the last few months the INS has been pouring millions of local, state, and federal court records into its database so that workers who only a few months ago could travel freely will now be detained," he said. "We are now being forced to pay twice for the same conviction."

Calero said that the Justice Department draft of legislation to increase the powers of the U.S.A. Patriot Act would strip citizenship from people who supported groups that the United States considers terrorist organizations. "Whereas before people could renounce their citizenship, now the government says that your renunciation of citizenship can be inferred from your conduct," Calero said.

Part of drive toward war

This and other recent moves go hand in hand with the drive towards war, he said. "As the government intensifies attacks against Iraq they will step up patriotic and nationalist rhetoric as a part of an offensive against all working people." This is part of "an effort to defend their system," he said, "as it faces a deepening economic crisis."

A number of participants stayed after the presentations to continue the discussion, stock up on defense committee literature, and look over the informative display put together by volunteers.

"As soon as I heard about this fight I wanted to do something," said Willa Cofield, who first became active in politics in North Carolina in the civil rights movement of the 1960s. She had learned of Calero's fight at a meeting of POP, and afterwards wrote a letter to the INS in Houston and sent a contribution to the defense committee.

"All of us who are concerned about civil rights and human rights have to support Róger and others who are in a similar situation," she said.

John Rodrigues, a 58-year-old worker from Guyana who has lived in the United States since 1976, said he had learned of the meeting that morning when a supporter of Calero distributing the *Militant* knocked on his door. "I didn't have to read anything to come," he said, noting that he knows many people from the West Indies who have been deported or are facing deportation.

"You can't deprive one person of their rights without depriving them all," said Zhang Zemin, from Nanjing, China, who has lived in the United States for 20 years. "It's time to speak out against this," he said. "What happened to Calero could happen to me—I got my green card 12 years ago."

Linius Tejada and Maria Paulino are both Dominicans who live in the neighborhood. They decided to attend because of the case of Miguel Soto, who had owned a beauty salon in the neighborhood and is currently incarcerated at the immigration jail in Elizabeth, New Jersey. "He was arrested by the INS one month ago," said Paulino. "He has a U.S. passport and was born in Puerto Rico but the INS says he is not a citizen and is tying to deport him."

Calero said that he faces a deportation hearing on March 25. "We want to go to the hearing with as much public support as we can," he said, as he encouraged all those present to get involved in his and other struggles. "We have no illusions that it is an easy fight but there is a growing response to the attacks we are facing."

Participants in the meeting contributed more than $900 to the defense effort.

N.Y. rally protests moves to deport Palestinian

BY JOHN STUDER

NEW YORK—More than 100 people rallied to oppose the deportation of Farouk Abdel-Muhti at the Winston Unity Center here on February 8. The event raised funds for his defense campaign. The outspoken Palestinian activist has been held in detention by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) since April 2002.

The INS has announced that it plans to deport Abdel-Muhti. The Palestinian points out that because he was born on the West Bank before Israel was formed, he is a stateless person and cannot be deported to Israel or Jordan, and he does not hold a passport from the Palestinian Authority. He also notes that he would face victimization by the Israeli authorities should he be sent back.

Excerpts from a documentary on Farouk's fight now in production were shown to start the meeting.

"By fighting back against his detention Farouk represents all the people held in detention who do not have any champion," New York attorney Lynne Stewart, the first speaker, told the crowd. Stewart is facing federal charges of passing on information to "terrorist" groups for her work serving as defense counsel for Sheik Omar Abdel-Rahman, who is imprisoned on charges related to the first bombing of the World Trade Center.

Róger Calero, the associate editor of *Perspectiva Mundial* magazine who is facing INS efforts to deport him, spoke and extended his solidarity with Abdel-Muhti's fight.

Other speakers included Martha Cameron of Justice for Detainees, which organizes opposition to the government's "special registration" program, which has led to the arrest of hundreds of immigrants, and Errol Maitland, a producer on New York's WBAI radio. Maitland told how Abdel-Muhti had helped on the station's programs about the struggle of the Palestinian people against Israeli occupation.

Joe Kupferman, Abdel-Muhti's attorney, reported that Abdel-Muhti has been told by the INS that they are considering moving him to another detention facility—a move that he opposes.

David Wilson from the Palestinian activist's defense committee read a message from Abdel-Muhti. "The INS detainees are not criminals," said the statement. "They are all victims."

For more information on Abdel-Muhti's fight, contact the Committee for the Release of Farouk Abdel-Muhti, PO Box 20587, Tompkins Square Station, New York, NY 10009, or at www.freefarouk.org.

Róger Calero defense campaign tour

The Róger Calero Defense Committee is organizing a speaking tour for Calero in cities around the country to broaden the fight to stop his deportation by the INS. Below is the schedule for the next stops in the tour. Requests for additional tour dates can be made to the committee.

Seattle Feb. 20–22

Colorado/Utah Feb. 23–25

Chicago Feb. 27–Mar. 1

Detroit March 2–3

Cleveland March 4–6

Charlotte March 7–8

Boston March 13–15

For more information or to send a contribution, contact the Róger Calero Defense Committee, c/o PRDF, Box 761, Church St. Station, New York, NY 10007; phone/fax (212) 563-0585.

•Send messages to INS district director Hipolito Acosta demanding the exclusion moves against Calero be dropped. Messages can be faxed to (281) 774-5989 or mailed to the Immigration and Naturalization Service, 126 Northpoint Drive, Houston, TX 77060. Copies should be sent to the Róger Calero Defense Committee.

• Sign and distribute petitions demanding the INS drop the exclusion of Calero. A brochure and petition are available from the defense committee (e-mail: calerodefense@yahoo.com).

• Funds are needed to meet legal and other expenses. Defense campaign backers in every city need to raise thousands of dollars for these needs. Organize phone calling for donations, seek honoraria for speaking engagements, and take collections at public meetings. The goal is to raise more than $50,000 by March 25, the date of Calero's deportation hearing. Contributions are tax-deductible.

U.S. rulers block Kurdish fight for self-determination

The following selection on the Kurdish struggle for national self-determination is excerpted from "The Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq," the lead article in issue no. 7 of the Marxist magazine *New International*. The article is based on a talk given by Socialist Workers Party national secretary Jack Barnes on March 30, 1991, just weeks after the U.S.-organized slaughter of the Gulf war in Iraq. Copyright © 1991 by 408 Printing and Publishing Corp. Reprinted by permission.

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BY JACK BARNES

The U.S. rulers' military "victory" put an international spotlight on another unresolved fight for national self-determination in the region—that of the Kurdish people. Prior to the Gulf war the Kurdish struggle had largely been in retreat, having been dealt repeated defeats over the past half century by the Iraqi, Turkish, Iranian, and Syrian ruling classes, with the complicity of Washington, London, Paris, and Moscow. The consequences of the Gulf war have now posed Kurdish national self-determination more sharply than at any time since the close of World War II and the years just after the 1958 revolution that overthrew the monarchy in Iraq.

Some twenty million to thirty million Kurds are divided between southeastern Turkey, northeastern Syria, northern Iraq, and northwestern Iran, as well as a small region in the southern part of the USSR. An independent Kurdish republic came into existence in northern Iran after the establishment of a workers' and peasants' government in neighboring Azerbaijan in December 1945.[1]

Although the Kurdish republic was crushed by the Iranian monarchy a year later, the Kurds continued their struggle during the decades that followed. The U.S. rulers have alternately doled out aid with an eyedropper to Kurdish nationalist groups, and then abruptly cut off this backing, depending on Washington's shifting relations with regimes in the area, especially Baghdad and Tehran.

The Kurdish people took advantage of the weakening of the Saddam Hussein regime as a result of the war to press forward their struggle once again, holding many villages and towns—including the major city of Kirkuk—for a week or more in March. Baghdad used helicopter gunships and heavy armor to crush the Kurdish rebellion with ruthless brutality, causing two million or more Kurdish refugees to attempt to cross the Turkish and Iranian borders.

As we discuss here today, the U.S. and European imperialist powers have declared a temporary refugee "enclave" for the Kurds north of the thirty-sixth parallel in northern Iraq near the Turkish border. Washington is sending troops, Special Forces units, into northern Iraq to function as what amounts to little more than a police force for Saddam Hussein. Along with Turkish soldiers, the U.S. troops are forcing the refugees out of Turkey and off nearby mountains into ill- provisioned and barren transit camps. Washington's aim is to push the Kurds back to the towns and villages from which they fled.

At best, this enclave will be the temporary equivalent of an Indian reservation in the United States or one of the many blocked-off areas near Israel's borders containing Palestinian refugee camps. The imperialists share a common interest with the capitalist regimes in Baghdad, Ankara, Damascus, and Tehran in ensuring that such a "haven" for the Kurds is short- lived....

For the ruling class in Turkey, which joined Washington in the war against Iraq in hopes of winning trade favors and military aid and hardware, the results so far—nearly one million refugees pounding at its borders—are nothing short of a catastrophe. (The Turkish regime is also suffering major economic blows from honoring the continuing blockade, which shuts off Turkey's oil pipeline with Iraq and the resulting flow of funds into the state treasury.) These events have brought to greater world attention once again the Turkish rulers' own suppression of the Kurdish people, until recently legally denied the right even to speak their own language in Turkey—and they are still denied the right to read, write, or be educated in Kurdish.

Above all, the Kurdish people have come to the center stage in world politics as never before, not primarily as victims, but as courageous and determined fighters for national rights....

The U.S. rulers did not anticipate the scope of the rebellions by Kurds and other oppressed toilers in Iraq, nor the bloody suppression unleashed by Saddam Hussein and its embarrassing media results at home. But the most important point is that such matters were never part of Washington's calculations one way or the other. The U.S. rulers have no interest in the national rights of the Kurds. The depth of the national pride and determination of the Kurdish people—like that of the Palestinians and other fighting peoples—is a mystery to them; it will always catch them by surprise. To the contrary, Washington's interest is in forging stronger ties of imperialist domination with a subjugated Iraqi government and with other historic butchers of the Kurds: the Turkish government, the Syrian government, and, to the degree possible, the Iranian government.

Militant map/Mike Shur

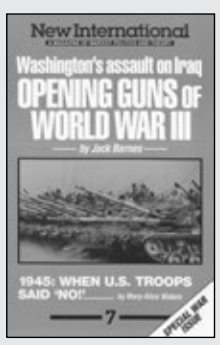
Map shows area of Kurdish population in Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Iran, and Armenia.

[1]The Kurdish regime held power for nearly a year. When the Iranian monarchy moved to crush the two governments and reoccupy the areas in December 1946, the Soviet government opposed the resistance efforts by the Azerbaijani and Kurdish peoples. This led to a split in the Azerbaijani leadership, with the majority following Stalin's dictate and calling off armed resistance. The Stalinist leadership in Azerbaijan capitulated without a struggle. The fall of the Azerbaijani government quickly led to the fall of the Kurdish republic. Kurdish forces, however, organized a fighting retreat. The retreat was organized by Mustapha Barzani, the military commander of the Kurdish Republic of Mahabad, who had earlier led Kurds from Iraq to join the republic in northern Iran led by Ghazi Muhammad. Fighting the shah's army, they crossed the border into Iraq, where they came under attack by the armed forces of the Iraqi monarchy backed by British imperialism. Barzani then led his forces in a fighting retreat through Turkey and Iran into the Soviet Union. They remained there until the overthrow of the Iraqi monarchy in the July 1958 revolution when they returned to Iraqi Kurdistan and continued the struggle for self-determination.

for further reading

Opening Guns of World War III

Washington's Assault on Iraq



Jack Barnes

Washington's murderous assault on Iraq heralded increasingly sharp conflicts among imperialist powers, the rise of rightist and fascist forces, growing instability of international capitalism, and more wars. In *New International* no. 7. $12.00

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50 years of U.S. hostility to north Korea

Continued from Page 2

and U.S. troops entered the country later that year, however, local revolutionary committees took power from Japanese authorities. A People's Republic, with its capital in Seoul, was established.

Once deployed in the south, the U.S. command brushed this government aside. U.S. Gen. John Hodge first tried to reinstate the Japanese authorities but backed off in the face of widespread protests. He then declared that "military government is the only government in south Korea."

U.S. Gen. Douglas MacArthur introduced English as the official language, and stated that those Koreans "acting against the occupation or violating order and tranquillity will be mercilessly and severely punished." In February 1946 Washington installed the dictator Syngman Rhee.

In the north the Soviet forces recognized the republic and did not block the activities of people's committees, which had seized Japanese and Korean collaborators' property. The northern government legalized all peasant seizures of land, and confiscated the land of the Japanese colonialists, their collaborators, and rent-racketeering landlords.

From the start the U.S.-backed south Korean government opposed national reunification, rejecting proposals from the north to merge the two administrations.

U.S. invasion and war

With the beginning of the Korean War on June 25, 1950, military forces from the north responded to threats from the south by rapidly liberating more than 90 percent of Korean territory. Land reform was instituted by the northern army in all liberated areas.

Washington then mobilized massive reinforcements under the UN flag to try to smash the north Korean forces. While U.S. troops predominated, other governments, from Britain to Turkey, committed troops to the invasion. At first the advance was rapid, as the U.S.-led armies pushed the northern troops back to the Yalu River, which borders China.

At this point the tide turned. The new workers and farmers government in China responded by sending hundreds of thousands of troops into the war on the side of the north. U.S. forces were pushed back, almost to where the demarcation line had been to begin with.

Almost 6 million U.S. troops fought in Korea, 54,000 of whom died. Up to 4 million Koreans were killed, the great majority of them civilians. Throughout this period Washington carried out large-scale bombing, especially over the north. Few targets were left when they were done. Areas in the south were also carpet-bombed.

The Korean fighters, backed by Chinese volunteers, had dealt the U.S. armed forces their first defeat. To add to the blows suffered by U.S. imperialism, the mobilizations by Chinese workers and peasants to defend their borders and revolution culminated in the establishment of a workers state in the world's most populous country.

U.S. backs dictatorship in south

In the decades after the war, Washington devoted enormous resources to keeping the military government in the south in power. The U.S. troops stationed in Korea, for example, provided backing to the bloody military crackdown on a popular uprising in the southern city of Kwangju in 1980.

At the same time the U.S. and Japanese corporations and banks poured billions of dollars of investment into south Korea, using it as an export platform and profiting from the low wages paid to its workers. The industrial working class grew in numbers and confidence. Workers built unions in spite of repression and have fought for an improved standard of living and conditions of work.

In the face of sustained struggles for democratic rights, the south Korean rulers were forced to end military rule and hold elections in 1993.

During the 1990s, the U.S. rulers increased pressure on the north, seeking to take advantage of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the associated slump in the country's foreign trade.

Agriculture and industry suffered further blows in the north when the country was hit by a series of one-two punches of drought and floods. In spite of these events, however, the workers state has neither collapsed nor made the concessions insisted on by the U.S. rulers—including the demand to withdraw a large part of their armed forces from the DMZ.

With already widespread support for the reunification growing in strength, the south Korea government has been forced to enter on-again, off-again negotiations with the north. The Internal Security law forbidding any political activity favorable to the north or in support of reunification remains on the books, however.

Strings attached to U.S. AIDS funds

Continued from Page 5

sub-Saharan African countries in 2001 than to all of the former Soviet Union and Eastern European countries combined," said Bush's 2002 report on the pact. The report also noted that sub-Saharan Africa supplies 18 percent of U.S. oil imports.

Bush described his proposal as "a work of mercy beyond all current international efforts to help the people of Africa." The boast would sound a little empty, however, to those who know of Cuba's contribution to the global fight against AIDS, including the voluntary efforts of the country's health workers.

Speaking at a UN conference on the disease in June 2001, Cuban vice president Carlos Lage offered to provide 4,000 doctors and health-care workers to help treat patients in sub-Saharan Africa and other Third World countries. Cuba, he said, would provide teachers for 20 medical schools to train 1,000 doctors a year, and provide AIDS-fighting anti-retroviral drugs for 30,000 patients.

At the same conference, the UN secretary general called for contributions of $10 billion a year to respond to the pandemic. Washington offered $200 million.

Lage questioned why governments of the wealthy powers could not provide the amount requested. At the same time, he said that "donations and goodwill...are not the solutions. What we need is justice and solidarity." He urged the assembled governments to demand cancellation of the debt owed by semicolonial countries to banks in the imperialist world.

Women's platoon saluted at Hav

Achievements of Cuba's socialist revolution discussed in new books on 'Marianas

Continued from front page

Cuba; Commander Belarmino Castilla Mas, a vice-president of Cuba's Council of Ministers; and author Tomás Diez Acosta, of the Institute of Cuban History.

In the audience were a number of veteran revolutionary combatants. Many, like Puebla, had taken part in the revolutionary war, led by the Rebel Army and July 26 Movement, that overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista on Jan. 1, 1959. Lilia Rielo was one of Puebla's comrades-in-arms in the Mariana Grajales Women's Platoon, the groundbreaking female combat unit of the Rebel Army. Brig. Gen. Rolando Kindelán had gone to the Sierra Maestra mountains together with Teté Puebla in July 1957 to join the guerrilla army led by Fidel Castro; he is currently president of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution in Havana.

Also present was Brig. Gen. Rafael Moracén Limonta, head of international relations for the Association of Combatants. The Association, many of whose members took part in the event, is made up of revolutionary fighters spanning several generations, from the revolutionary war to Cuba's missions of internationalist solidarity around the world.

Aguirrechu noted that *Marianas in Combat* is Pathfinder's latest in a growing number of books and pamphlets on the Cuban Revolution, many of which have been presented at the Havana Book Fair in recent years. These include, she said, *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War, 1956-58* and the *Bolivian Diary* by Che Guevara; *Pombo*: *A Man of Che's 'Guerrilla'* by Harry Villegas; *Making History*: *Interviews with Four Generals of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces*; *Playa Girón*/*Bay of Pigs* by Fidel Castro and José Ramón Fernández; and *From the Escambray to the Congo* by Víctor Dreke. Aguirrechu introduced Waters as the president of Pathfinder and a member of the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States. (See accompanying remarks by Waters in this issue.)

Militant/Jonathan Silberman

Delsa Esther "Teté" Puebla, Brigadier General in the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba, speaks February 3 at launching of *Marianas in Combat; Teté Puebla and the Mariana Grajales Women's Platoon in Cuba's Revolutionary War 1956–58.* Brig. Gen. Harry Villegas and Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press, (to left of Teté), also spoke. Inset: Lieutenant Teté Puebla, second in command of the women's Liberty Caravan that traveled the length of Cuba following the revolutionary triumph in January 1959.

Needed by working people

Waters noted that around the world there are growing numbers of youth who, "like the young Teté of this book, are unwilling to accept the brutal realities of the capitalist world in which they live. Among them is a small but growing vanguard that is beginning to search ever more insistently in the experiences of past revolutionary struggles for the lessons that can help point a way forward in today's world."

Pathfinder has published the story of Teté Puebla and the Mariana Grajales Women's Platoon, like the other titles mentioned by Aguirrechu, Waters said, because these books show how "only an uncompromising struggle to destroy the state power of the capitalist rulers and replace it with the power of the toilers can open the door to the 'other world' that is so frequently demanded" by young people entering political activity today. This is why the example of the Cuban revolution continues to be decisive, she said

Waters noted that Cuba's socialist revolution has, in a few short years, "brought the kind of advances in the economic and social status of women that it took well over a century of struggle to partially achieve in the imperialist world and are still a distant dream for hundreds of millions of women throughout the so-called third world."

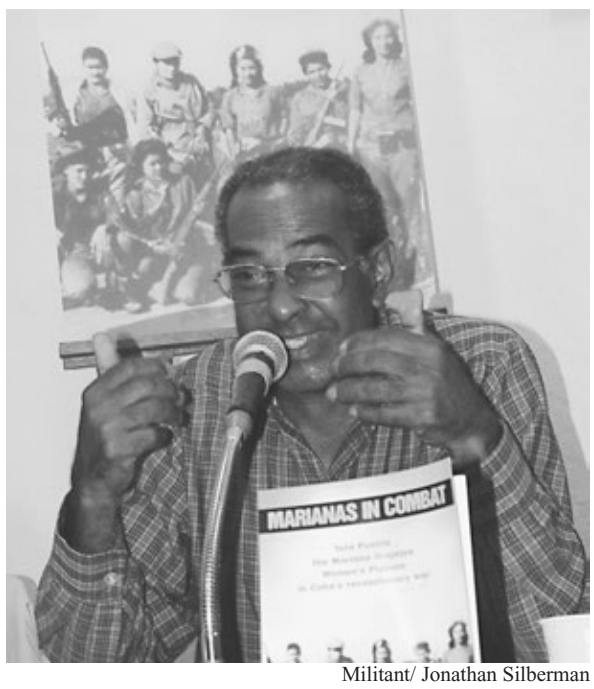
In her remarks Gen. Puebla explained with humor that "it wasn't easy to do the interview. It took two rounds. Compañero Villegas almost locked me in his office" with the interviewers to get it done. "One can talk a lot about the revolutionary war, what others did," she said, "but it's difficult for me to talk about myself."

Women in the revolution

"This book tells part of the story of my life," Puebla said, "starting with my youth and participation in the revolutionary war, and the work that Cuban women have carried out over the past 44 years of the revolution."

She pointed to the involvement of women in mass organizations such as the Federation of Cuban Women; the integration of growing numbers of women into the work force; the concrete place of revolutionary cadres who are women in winning support for the revolution from Cuban peasants as they work alongside them in the fields; and the work carried out by many women in assisting the children and families of war victims.

"One of our greatest achievements is the integration of women into the revolution," Puebla said. Cuba's revolutionary leadership, beginning with Fidel Castro, has actively promoted this process, she emphasized.



Militant/ Jonathan Silberman

Brig. Gen. Harry Villegas speaks at book launch.

Villegas, the executive vice president of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution, began by citing the foreword to *Marianas in Combat* by Commander of the Revolution Juan Almeida, president of the combatants' association. Teté Puebla's account, writes Almeida, helps readers discover for themselves "her revolutionary fiber, and to appreciate more deeply the generosity and firmness of our revolution."

Villegas and Puebla grew up together in Yara in eastern Cuba, and he concentrated his remarks on some of the experiences they shared. "Teté joined the underground movement in Yara, a small town where everyone knew each other"—a fact that increased the dangers. The Batista dictatorship's army maintained an intimidating presence there, and the regime's informers reported on any "suspicious" activity.

In 1956, as a teenager, Teté was one of the first to join an underground cell of the July 26 Movement that organized the struggle in Yara. "I'm talking about a young woman who was 15 years old," Villegas said, "who like other young women danced, played, laughed, enjoyed life, but when it became necessary to fight for her country, joined the revolutionary struggle."

In July 1957 it became too dangerous for Puebla to remain in Yara. A few months later, when Villegas arrived in the Sierra Maestra mountains to join the Rebel Army, "Teté was already there," he said. Her presence in the Rebel Army's command post had a big impact on him. "You can imagine how happy I was to see a compañera from my town there."

Over the following months, Villegas explained, "Teté carried out important missions." In July 1958, after defeating a major army offensive, the Rebel Army leadership handed over several hundred captured soldiers to the International Red Cross, forcing the Batista regime to agree to a truce while the transfer took place.

"Teté was designated by Fidel as a messenger to give the army the proposal for an arrangement to turn over the prisoners," Villegas said. "She went carrying a white flag, risking her life." She had to give the message to Merob Sosa, a major in Batista's army who was infamous as an officer responsible for acts of murder and abuses against the peasants and rural population.

The 'Marianas'

In September 1958, Puebla became a founder and second in command of the Mariana Grajales Women's Platoon, an all-female combat unit.

"The Marianas," Villegas explained, "were a group of 13 determined and daring women who fought, arms in hand." It was difficult for Fidel to convince everyone in the Rebel Army command that it was correct to form the platoon, "and that women could really use weapons just like the men. But he did," Villegas said. As a lieutenant, Puebla took part in numerous battles, several of which she describes in the book.

"The Marianas platoon was an extraordinarily important element in further increasing the morale of the troops of the Rebel Army," Villegas noted.

After the victory of the revolutionary forces in January 1959, "Teté did not simply live off the glory of having been in the Sierra Maestra and in the Marianas," Villegas said. She took on a number of responsibilities, from director of the Rebel Army's Department of Assistance to War Victims and their families, to head of education in the Eastern Army, to director of the Guaicanamar Cattle Plan in Jaruco, in

From Pathfinder

MARIANAS IN COMBAT
Teté Puebla and the Mariana Grajales Women's Platoon

Brigadier General Teté Puebla, the highest ranking woman in Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces, joined the struggle to overthrow the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista in 1956, when she was fifteen years old. This is her story from clandestine action in the cities, to serving as an officer in the victorious Rebel Army's first all-women's platoon. For nearly fifty years, her life has been intertwined with the fight to transform the social and economic status of women, a course of action inseparable from Cuba's socialist revolution. $14 Also available in Spanish

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vana book fair

s in Combat' and October 1962 crisis

Havana province.

"You can see in Teté an example of revolutionary fiber, an example to emulate," Villegas said. "That is why you must read this book."

October 1962

In opening the portion of the program on *October 1962*: *The 'Missile' Crisis as Seen from Cuba*, Aguirrechu noted that Editora Política's Spanish edition of the book had quickly sold out, and that a new printing is under way. She then introduced Mary-Alice Waters.

"Hundreds of books have been published in the United States on what is commonly known there as the Missile Crisis," said Waters. "But until October of last year, there was not one—not *a single* one—that did not treat those events as a cold war conflict between two superpowers in which the revolutionary government and the people of Cuba were largely absent. They were like the movie *Thirteen Days*, where Cuba is seen once or twice as a palm-studded launching platform for some antiaircraft artillery, and that is it."

The great merit of Tomás Diez's book, Waters said, "is that it places squarely at the center of the screen the fact that the October Crisis began with Washington's reaction to what happened on Jan. 1, 1959. The determination to crush the Cuban Revolution accelerated after the victory of the Cuban people at the Bay of Pigs and the Kennedy administration's renewed invasion preparations. It was not the 'wise statesmanship' of Kennedy or Khrushchev that prevented a nuclear holocaust, as is so often argued by their apologists."

Several days into the crisis, Waters pointed out, Kennedy was informed by the Pentagon of the stunning cost in American lives that Cuban resistance to an invasion would entail, and "thus the political price for him, his administration, and its place in history." It was the "calm determination and, above all, the battle-readiness of millions of Cubans to defend their sovereignty and their socialist revolution," she emphasized, "that stayed the hand of Washington."

"It was also that determination that helped win me and others of my generation in the United States to a lifetime of support for the Cuban Revolution and to the communist movement," Waters said.

Carlos Lechuga emphasized that the book deals with the October Crisis from the Cuban perspective, telling the truth about the events. First and foremost, he said, the book explains that the cause of the conflict "was the aggressive U.S. policy against Cuba since the first days of the revolution." (Lechuga's remarks will be published in a coming issue of the *Militant*.)

Leading up to October 1962, the Kennedy administration stepped up its acts of sabotage, attempts to assassinate Cuban leaders, and other counterrevolutionary actions against Cuba, while trying to isolate Cuba diplomatically.

"Cuba's position was always based on principles—on the defense of its sovereignty, on its right to have the weapons it considered necessary to repel the aggression of which it was a victim," Lechuga said. "Cuba did not compromise on its right to refuse to be inspected, nor did it agree to negotiate any encroachment on its independence."

The Cuban leadership, he said, acted on the basis that "the country's security depends above all on the courage, determination, and readiness of the people to participate in its defense."

Those in the audience purchased almost 90 copies in Spanish and 15 in English of *Marianas in Combat*. They also bought 46 copies of the English-language *October 1962*.

In discussions after the program, several participants commented that they were particularly struck by Waters's explanation from the platform that Pathfinder does not publish books like *Marianas in Combat* and *October 1962* in order to bring them to Cuba, "even though we're happy they are well received here." Pathfinder has "published the story of Teté Puebla and the Mariana Grajales Platoon, Waters said, because its example of what the revolutionary road and revolutionary character are all about is so "needed by those who find themselves in the front lines of the struggle for national liberation and socialism the world over—including by those of us who live and engage in working-class political activity in the United States."

Militant/Jonathan Silberman

Carlos Lechuga, appointed Cuba's ambassador to the United Nations during the events of October 1962, speaks at book launching about *October 1962: The 'Missile' Crisis as Seen from Cuba* by Cuban author Tomas Diez Acosta, seated to the right. At left is Iraida Aguirrechu of Editora Política, who chaired the meeting and co-edited the Cuban edition of the book.

'Book for front-line fighters the world over'

The following is the presentation by Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press, at the February 3 launching in Havana, Cuba, of *Marianas in Combat: Teté Puebla and the Mariana Grajales Women's Platoon in Cuba's Revolutionary War, 1956-58*. The book was recently published by Pathfinder in both English and Spanish.

Waters edited and wrote the introduction to *Marianas in Combat*. The book contains an interview with Delsa Esther "Teté" Puebla, a brigadier general in Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR) who was second in command of the Mariana Grajales Women's Platoon of the Rebel Army—"the Marianas"—during the 1956-58 revolutionary war that toppled the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. A foreword to the book was written by Juan Almeida, one of the three Commanders of the Revolution in Cuba and president of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution.

Speaking about the book at the launching, held as part of the annual Havana International Book Fair, were Teté Puebla and Brig. Gen. Harry Villegas. Villegas, currently a leader of the Combatants Association, was a fighter in the revolutionary war who later served with Ernesto Che Guevara as part of internationalist missions in the Congo (where he took the nom de guerre "Pombo") and in Bolivia.

The Feb. 3 book launching also celebrated the publication by Pathfinder earlier this year of *October 1962: The 'Missile Crisis' As Seen from Cuba* by Tomás Diez Acosta. Speaking on that book was Carlos Lechuga, who served as Cuba's ambassador to the United Nations during much of the U.S. government-instigated crisis 40 years ago.

An article on the book launching appears in this issue. The remarks by Waters are copyright © 2003 by Pathfinder Press, and are reprinted by permission.

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BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

First, a thank you to all who are here this afternoon for giving us the honor of sharing with you the presentation of *Marianas en combate*. Above all we want to thank compañera Teté and the compañeros of the FAR; compañero Almeida, the author of the foreword; Pombo; and the entire leadership of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution. Their support and enthusiasm for this book made our collective efforts possible.

It is also in order here to extend a special thank you to compañera Iraida [Aguirrechu], without whose editorial capacities and unflagging collaboration neither this book nor the fine work by compañero Tomás Diez on the October Crisis, which we are also presenting the English translation of this afternoon, would have been completed. We are especially pleased that compañero Lechuga is also here with us today to talk about that work.

Others will be speaking of what *Marianas in Combat* means for you here in Cuba. For my part, I only want to say a few words about why this book is important for us in the United States and elsewhere beyond Cuba.

Needed on front lines

We are very happy that *Marianas in Combat* is being presented not only here in Havana, but elsewhere in Cuba too. Pathfinder, however, a communist publishing house located in New York, has not published this book in both Spanish and English in order to bring it to Cuba. That would be not only presumptuous but something far beyond our meager resources. We have published the story of Teté Puebla and the Mariana Grajales Platoon because it is needed by those who find themselves in the front lines of the struggle for national liberation and socialism the world over—including by those of us who live and engage in working-class political activity in the United States.

Courtesy Teté Puebla

Raúl Castro Mercader driving jeep in Holguín with (left to right) Lilia Rielo, Teté Puebla, and Isabel Rielo, late 1958, after the town was liberated by the Rebel Army.

Already today—and in the future that is fast coming upon us in country after country—there are growing legions of young people who, like the young Teté of this book, are unwilling to accept the brutal realities of the capitalist world in which they live. Among them there is a small but growing vanguard that is beginning to search ever more insistently in the experiences of past revolutionary struggles for the lessons that can help point a way forward in today's world.

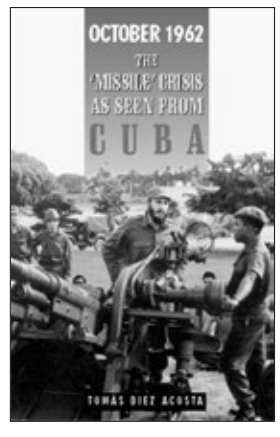
The tens of thousands of young people protesting in Washington and London against the war, or making their way to the campgrounds of Porto Alegre in Brazil, still believe in their large majority that it is possible to tame imperialism, to cajole and pressure it, to shame it into adopting a more benign posture. There are many who believe that their own imperialist masters speaking French or German or Swedish with an anti-American accent offer a kinder, more humane alternative

Continued on Page 10

From Pathfinder

October 1962: The Missile Crisis as Seen from Cuba

In October 1962, during what is widely known as the Cuban Missile crisis, Washington pushed the world to the edge of nuclear war. Here, for the first time, the full story of that historic moment is told from the perspective of the Cuban people. Led by Cuba's revolutionary government, their determination to defend the country's sovereignty and their socialist revolution blocked U.S. plans for a military assault and opened the way to resolve the crisis, this saving humanity from the consequences of a nuclear holocaust. $24



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‘Book for front-line fighters the world over’

Continued from Page 9

behind which they can take refuge.

Most of these youth have not yet concluded from their own painful experiences, aided by a study of history—as many of you began to realize some 50 years ago—that no lasting reform is possible except as a byproduct of revolutionary struggle. The leopard cannot change its spots. Only an uncompromising struggle to destroy the state power of the capitalist rulers and replace it with the power of the toilers, as you did here in Cuba, can open the door to the “other world” that is so frequently demanded.

Confidence to fight and win

This is the world—today—in which the concrete example of Teté is so important. Knowledge of her story increases our confidence in our ability to fight and win. Through it we come to recognize that revolutions are not the work of gods or devils but are made of human clay, by ordinary human beings like the men and women we meet in these pages. They are the work of men and women who, as the great American revolutionary leader Malcolm X said, awake to their own worth and dignity and who take the future of humanity in their own hands, accomplishing the impossible because they have not yet “learned” it can’t be done. And in doing so they transform themselves as they transform their world.

Young women, especially, will respond to the example of the Marianas. They will identify with the portrait of Teté that emerges from these pages—with her growing audacity and courage in combat, with her competence, firmness, and humanity in the battles of life.

Women everywhere who are fighting for their emancipation, for the right to live and work as equals, see themselves reflected in the Marianas, who overcame the prejudices of even some of their most revolutionary compañeros. The Marianas proved in combat that the women of the Rebel Army, having already assumed all the other duties of the revolution, were also able to fight arms in hand, side by side—not ahead of or behind—the men.

Through this history, moreover, we come to appreciate even more fully the caliber and class consciousness of the leadership of the Cuban Revolution from its earliest days. We come to understand how and why that leadership has been able to unify and mobilize the people of Cuba to hold at bay the imperial might of the North American colossus for more than 40 years.

In a few short decades, the Cuban revolution has brought the kind of advances in the economic and social status of women that it took well over a century of struggle to partially achieve in the imperialist world and are still a distant dream for hundreds of millions of women throughout the so-called third world. The achievements of the Cuban Revolution stand as a powerful refutation of those who light-mindedly claim that Marxism, communism, has no adequate place in its theory for the millennia-long oppression of women, nor any place in its practice for eradicating that condition.

Depression and war

To finish I want to return to the beginning. Finance capital’s feverish speculative bubble of the 1990s was built not on an expansion of productive capacity, but on the inflation of fictitious paper capital, of mammoth debt imposed on the poor countries of the world as well as the people of the imperialist centers. That bubble is now collapsing, as we knew it must.

What’s more, the audience here today does not need to be reminded that we *are* within weeks of the opening of a full-scale, Washington-organized assault on the peoples of Iraq. This war will go forward as the imperialist rivals fight among themselves over a new division of the world—over domination of oil and other raw materials and strategic installations vital not only to their continued exploitation of the earth’s toilers but of even to their own economic and social equilibrium.

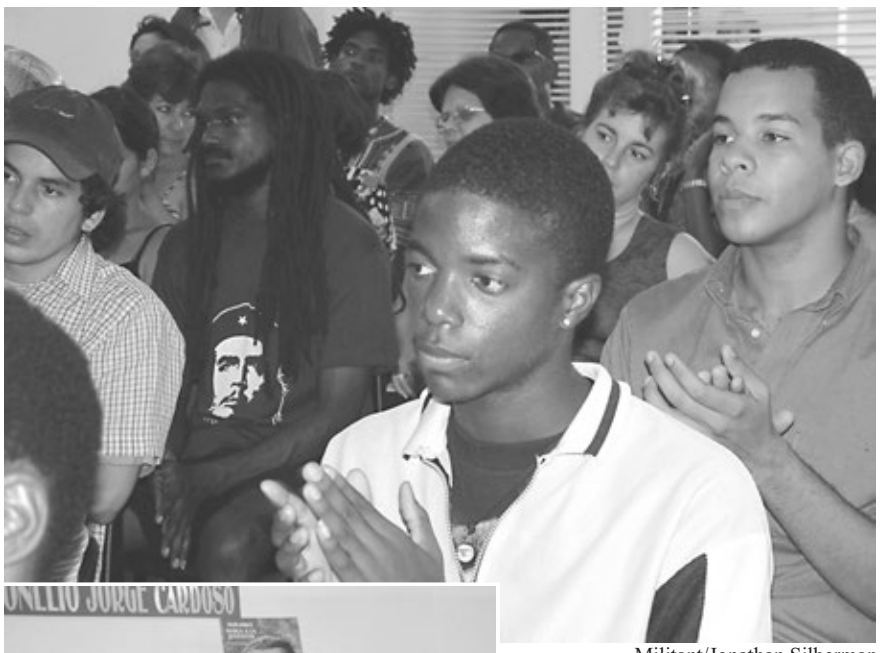
The world depression that will mark the opening decades of the 21st century is unfolding at an accelerating pace. In this world, we must not act on the assumption that Bush or Blair, that Schroeder or Chirac is driven by irrationality or whatever else their individual personality disorders may be. They are acting as the responsible and competent representatives of the classes for which they speak. What we are seeing and experiencing is simply the lawful development of capital—with the devastating consequences it will continue to produce for working people everywhere, until the day we are strong enough to put an end to that system altogether.

But this is precisely the world in which acts of resistance, courage, and self-affirmation such as those we learn about in the pages of *Marianas in Combat* are also accelerating. From Palestine, to Korea—south, as well as north; from the Battle of Ideas in the factories, fields and classrooms of Cuba; to the packing plants of Minnesota, and the prisons of the empire where our five Cuban compañeros are incarcerated today alongside some two million of their brothers and sisters.

Marianas in Combat will be sold not only in book stores and read in libraries around the world. It will be carried by thinking workers and youth into the streets of workers neighborhoods, onto the university campuses, to the gates and into the locker rooms of factories and mines, into the fields—wherever there is work to be done today to sow revolutionary consciousness, to sow ideas, to prepare the future.

That is why we—in the United States—need this book *in both English and in Spanish*. It is why we are so proud to be presenting *Marianas in Combat* here with you today.

First Spanish edition of ‘Malcolm X Talks to Young People’ launched at fair



Militant/Jonathan Silberman

HAVANA—More than 100 people attended an event here February 8 to launch *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*, published in Spanish by Casa Editora Abril, the publishing house of the Union of Young Communists of Cuba (UJC), and in English and Spanish editions by New York-based Pathfinder Press. The meeting was part of the recently concluded Havana International Book Fair. This is the first time a collection of speeches by Malcolm has been published in Cuba, a fact highlighted by several speakers. Abril produced the book in response to the widespread interest among Cubans in the U.S.-born revolutionary leader. The event was chaired by Herminio Camacho, director of Abril (shown speaking in inset photo). Others on the platform were (from left to right) Iroel Sanchez, president of the Cuban Book Institute; Enrique Ubieta, editor of the magazine *Contracorriente*; and Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder.

The launching was prominently advertised in the daily book fair tabloid and reported by television as part of the book fair coverage. The audience included students from the University of the Havana, fair goers who had stopped by Pathfinder’s stand, and leaders of the UJC. Participants purchased nearly 100 copies of the Spanish-language edition and more than 40 of the English. The book was one of the most sought-after titles at the Pathfinder booth during the 11-day fair.

Contribute to the Books for Cuba Fund

The *Militant* is appealing for contributions to the Books for Cuba Fund. This fund makes it possible to respond to requests by Cuban libraries, schools, and other institutions for titles published by Pathfinder. It also means they can be sold at affordable prices to Cubans at events like the Havana International Book Fair.

As in previous years, Pathfinder has a booth at this year’s fair, which runs from January 30 to February 9 in Havana and from there will go to other cities. During past fairs, librarians, students, workers, soldiers, and others have made requests for Pathfinder titles. In response, the publisher has made a number of donations to libraries and other cultural institutions.

On the final day Pathfinder will make every title in its booth available in Cuban pesos. Many people who have visited the booth eagerly await the opportunity to read books on the international class struggle, U.S. politics, the fight for women’s liberation, and other questions.

This year Pathfinder is organizing special presentations on several new titles at the fair. They are: *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*; *Marianas in Combat: Teté Puebla and the Mariana Grajales Women’s Platoon in Cuba’s Revolutionary War, 1956–58*; and *October 1962: The ‘Missile’ Crisis as Seen from Cuba* by Tomás Diez Acosta.

Militant/Martin Koppel

Pathfinder booth at 2003 Havana book fair draws stream of visitors.

To contribute, please send checks or money orders made out to the *Militant* and earmarked “Books for Cuba Fund” to the *Militant*, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.

Volunteers target February 17 for sales effort with Pathfinder titles

BY JIM ALTENBERG

Volunteers organizing the sales of Pathfinder books to bookstores and libraries have set the February 17 President’s Day holiday for a concentrated effort to call on bookstore buyers and managers.

While many Pathfinder supporters will have the February 17 holiday off from work, bookstores generally remain open for business. This will give sales representatives a chance to get back to bookstores they have visited in the past several months with some of Pathfinder’s new titles as well as with the 2003 Pathfinder catalog that is just off the press.

The catalog presents the entire range of Pathfinder’s revolutionary books and pamphlets in an attractive format.

Sales representatives will be taking along Pathfinder’s newly-published *Marianas in Combat: Teté Puebla and the Mariana Grajales Women’s Platoon in Cuba’s Revolutionary War 1956-58*. Published in both English and Spanish, this new book contains an interview with Teté Puebla, a brigadier general in Cuba’s Revolutionary Armed Forces who served in the Rebel Army’s first all-women’s unit during the revolutionary war to overthrow the U.S.-backed dictator Fulgencio Batista.

They will also be taking *Malcolm X habla a la juventud*, the first-ever publication in Spanish of Pathfinder’s collection *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*. Both the English and Spanish editions are new and include material by Malcolm X that has never been available in print before. There is also a Farsi-language edition.

Last month, supporters of Pathfinder in New York organized a similar sales campaign on Martin Luther King Day. They called on five store buyers, showing them the new Malcolm X title and material about other recently-published and forthcoming books. They were also able to use the day to train new volunteers on selling Pathfinder books to bookstores and other outlets.

Pathfinder sales representatives volunteer their time and effort to widen the distribution through bookstores and libraries of revolutionary literature published by Pathfinder Press. A five-person coordinating committee works under the direction of Pathfinder and the Pathfinder Reprint Project to set goals for sales, organize the work of sales representatives, and produce promotional material on the books.

Jim Altenberg is a member of the Pathfinder Reprint Project steering committee.

Workers force end to Venezuelan 'strike'

Continued from front page
tal of the western state of Zulia, where much of the country's oil drilling and production is concentrated.

"The supposedly ongoing oil strike is now just a show for the bosses to save face," García said. Most of the 30,000 workers at Petroleos de Venezuela (PdVSA—the state-owned petroleum company), he said, "stayed on their jobs for the last two months. The majority of the 10,000 managers and administrators who did strike have now been fired, and the new management is pro-Chávez."

"Oil production is now up to 1.8 million barrels per day (bpd), compared to 3.2 million before the strike," García added. It fell to 250,000 bpd in mid-December. "The employers did hurt the economy bad. But politically, working people are now stronger."

What was behind bosses' 'strike'?

Fedecámaras, the country's main business association, was the dominant force in the Democratic Coordinator opposition coalition that called the stoppage December 2. The action was backed by the Confederation of Venezuelan Workers (CTV). The coalition demanded Chávez's resignation and called for early elections. U.S. officials initially backed this stance, but—after Chávez made clear he would not accept that demand—took a public position of promoting negotiations between the two sides. Chávez became popular as a military officer in 1992 when he led a failed coup to oust the Democratic Action (AD) regime. AD is now among the political parties in the coalition. In the eyes of millions of working people, these opposition forces are responsible for impoverishment and for widespread repression.

Elected president in 1998, Chávez was reelected in 2000 with huge popular support against the traditional capitalist parties.

Capitalist relations have remained intact under his administration, with power remaining in the hands of the wealthiest capitalist families. At the same time, the Chávez government has aroused the ire of the capitalists with some measures that impinge on their prerogatives. They include an agrarian reform law, protection for working fishermen from overfishing by large commercial companies, and use of some state funds for cheap housing and other programs.

Worried about the increased expectations of working people that have been generated, the Venezuelan rulers have set about overthrowing the government. In April 2002 about a third of the military's high command, with support from the dominant capitalist families and Washington, ousted Chávez in a coup. Chávez returned to power in two days, after mobilizations by working people forced divisions in the military.

Largely purged of dissident officers, the armed forces supported the government in the latest crisis.

Class struggle intensifies

"During the boss lockout, workers, peasants, students and others opposed the attempt to oust Chávez," said Antonio Aguillón, a unionist in Caracas. "It was the same forces that defeated last year's coup." Along with the oil workers who, with the help of National Guard troops, restarted production, have been peasants fighting for land. Students held assemblies demanding universities reopen. Several large protests, including one of several hundred thousand in Caracas January 23, countered the many pro-strike mobilizations.

In a few cases, workers took over shutdown production facilities and demanded the government reopen them. According to García, unionists occupying Texdala, a textile factory in Maracay, and Central Carora, a sugar mill in Lara, also demanded workers control of production. The Bolivarian Workers Force is now demanding legislation that would nationalize companies that repeat similar lockouts, he said.

Under this pressure, the government took several measures that dealt blows to the opposition coalition. On January 17, for example, National Guard troops in the industrial city of Valencia seized the Empresas Polar beer warehouse, along with the Panamco water and soft-drink facility—an affiliate of Coca Cola—and reopened them.

Five days later the Supreme Court canceled a non-binding referendum on Chávez's rule that had been set for February 2 by the National Electoral Council. Chávez has continued to dismiss demands by the opposition to shorten his term. He instead insists that the opposition must now collect enough signatures on petitions if they want to push for a referendum on his rule in August, which is provided for in the country's constitution.

As the strike crumbled, Chávez decreed additional measures. These included setting a fixed exchange rate for the bolivar, the country's currency, to 1,600 to the U.S. dollar—a 16 percent revaluation—and foreign exchange controls to stop wealth being siphoned out of the country. The most popular new measure set price ceilings for a range of essential goods and services.

"We were elated to hear about the maximum prices," Armando Serpa said February 6. "Because of the strike, inflation and unemployment are up and people are hurting." He also said that the government is acting a little more promptly in response to the intensified demands by peasants for land.

National Guard attack on land struggle

"This is a contradictory process, however," said Serpa. "Two weeks ago, a local National Guard colonel led army troops who kicked out hundreds of peasants occupying land for the last two years from Compañía Inglesa. We don't know who's behind this action but we are fighting and we'll find out."

Inglesa, which is run by British capitalists, is one of the largest landowners in Venezuela. Peasants took over half a 12,000-acre farm owned by that company in early 2001. Serpa has been a member of the land committee that organizes the occupation, and helped host a tour of the land for visiting *Militant* reporters last July.

Since mid-January, peasants in the area have occupied the local offices of the National Institute of Land (INT), which is overseeing land expropriation and redistribution efforts. The peasants have succeeded in pressuring the government to start an investigation of the National Guard attack.

Workers are organizing similar efforts to press for their rights, Aguillón said, emphasizing that "this is necessary because the bosses are now reopening the plants but many workers are laid off, especially the more militant."

On February 15, meetings of oil workers are beginning nationwide to press for more workers control in the industry, said García. The leaderships of the large steelworkers union and several other unions have called for the formation of a new labor federation with the working title of UNETE (Unite) in response to the CTV's backing for the lockout.

Ontario strikers fight union-busting

Militant/John Steele

Striking members of Teamsters Local 879 at Columbian Chemicals in Hamilton, Ontario, confront company goon hired by strike-breaking outfit London Protection International, as he escorts busload of scabs through picket line. The 65 chemical workers went on strike November 26. The plant, U.S.-based Phelps Dodge Corporation, produces carbon black for tires, inks, paints, and plastics. The company is demanding to take away a 2 percent wage hike it initially offered.

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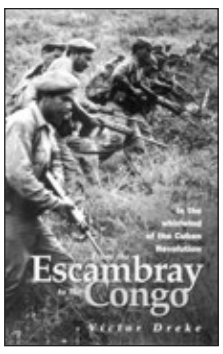

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Teachers' strike in Guatemala shuts down public school system

BY JOSE VELASQUEZ

GUATEMALA—A national teachers' strike here has paralyzed the public education system since January 13. Thousands of educational institutions are closed and over 2 million students from kindergarten to high school are without classes. Teachers are asking the government to meet 33 demands, including an increase in the education budget, better cafeteria food for the students, a 60 percent salary increase, and improved teaching materials.

Negotiations last year between the National Assembly of Teachers and the government had not advanced and by January teachers still had no response to their demands. The government claims it has no money to meet teachers' demands.

The teachers started their strike on the first day of classes, at the same time as peasants were demanding land that has been promised by the government and bus riders were protesting against price hikes.

Teachers blocked the main roads of Guatemala with busses, rocks, trees, and burning tires.

On January 24, in an attempt to break the strike, Minister of Education Mario Torres increased teacher salaries by US$12 a month. Teachers rejected the government move.

A week later thousands of teachers from all 22 provinces of Guatemala mobilized in a march to the National Palace. Since the protest, the Labor, Education, and Communications Ministries have sought to impose penalties on the protesting teachers.

On February 6, teachers' representatives met with the government. When the meeting proved inconclusive, dozens of teachers occupied the Ministry of Education building for six hours. Moises Fuentes, a spokesperson for the teachers' union, said "We want to return (to our classrooms), but we want concrete answers to our demands" first.

Revolutionary response to imperialist World War II

Printed below are excerpts from "A statement on the U.S. Entry into World War II" from *The Socialist Workers Party in World War II*, a collection of writings and speeches by James P. Cannon. The book covers the period from 1940 through 1943. Cannon was a founder of the Socialist Workers Party and its national secretary until 1953. The statement was first published in the January 1942 *Fourth International* magazine. Copyright © 1975 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

❖

BY JAMES P. CANNON

The considerations which determined our attitude toward the war up to the outbreak of hostilities between the United States and the Axis powers retain their validity in the new situation.

We considered the war upon the part of all the capitalist powers involved—Germany and France, Italy and Great Britain—as an *imperialist war*.

This characterization of the war was determined for us by the character of the state powers involved in it. They were all capitalist states in the epoch of imperialism; themselves imperialist—oppressing other nations or peoples—or satellites of imperialist powers. The extension of the war to the Pacific and the formal entry of the United States and Japan change nothing in this basic analysis.

Following Lenin, it made no difference to us which imperialist bandit fired the first shot; every imperialist power has for a quarter of a century been "attacking" every other imperialist power by economic and political means; the resort to arms is but the culmination of this process, which will continue as long as capitalism endures.

This characterization of the war does not apply to the war of the Soviet Union against German imperialism. We make a fundamental distinction between the Soviet Union and its "democratic" allies. We defend the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union is a workers' state, although degenerated under the totalitarian-political rule of the Kremlin bureaucracy. Only traitors can deny support to the Soviet workers' state in its war against fascist Germany. To defend the Soviet Union, in spite of Stalin and against Stalin, is to defend the nationalized property established by the October Revolution. That is a *progressive war*.

The war of China against Japan we likewise characterize as a progressive war. We support China. China is a colonial country, battling for national independence against an imperialist power. A victory for China would be a tremendous blow against all imperialism, inspiring all colonial peoples to throw off the imperialist yoke. The reactionary regime of Chiang Kai-shek, subservient to the "democracies," has hampered China's ability to conduct a bold war for independence; but that does not alter for us the essential fact that China is an oppressed nation fighting against an imperialist oppressor. We are proud of the fact that the Fourth Internationalists of China are fighting in the front ranks against Japanese imperialism.

James P. Cannon speaking at meeting in New York City, 1945.

No just war by imperialism

The Marxist analysis which determined our attitude toward the war up to December 8, 1941, continues to determine our attitude now. We were internationalists before December 8; we still are. We believe that the most fundamental bond of loyalty of all the workers of the world is the bond of international solidarity of the workers against their exploiters. We cannot assume the slightest responsibility for this war. No imperialist regime can conduct a just war. We cannot support it for one moment.

We are the most irreconcilable enemies of the fascist dictatorships of Germany and Italy and the military dictatorship of Japan. Our cothinkers of the Fourth International in the Axis nations and the conquered countries are fighting and dying in the struggle to organize the coming revolutions against Hitler and Mussolini.

We are doing all in our power to speed those revolutions. But those ex-socialists, intellectuals, and labor leaders, who in the name of "democracy" support the war of United States imperialism against its imperialist foes and rivals, far from aiding the German and Italian antifascists, only hamper their work and betray their struggle. The Allied imperialists, as every German worker knows, aim to impose a second and worse Versailles; the fear of that is Hitler's greatest asset in keeping the masses of Germany in subjection. The fear of the foreign yoke holds back the development of the German revolution against Hitler....

Our program against Hitlerism and for a workers' and farmers' government is today the program of only a small minority. The great majority actively or passively supports the war program of the Roosevelt administration. As a minority we must submit to that majority in action. We do not sabotage the war or obstruct the military forces in any way. The Trotskyists go with their generation into the armed forces. We abide by the decisions of the majority. But we retain our opinions and insist on our right to express them.

Our aim is to convince the majority that our program is the only one which can put an end to war, fascism, and economic convulsions. In this process of education the terrible facts speak loudly for our contention. Twice in twenty-five years world wars have wrought destruction. The instigators and leaders of those wars do not offer, and cannot offer, a plausible promise that a third, fourth, and fifth world war will not follow if they and their social system remain dominant. Capitalism can offer no prospect but the slaughter of millions and the destruction of civilization. Only socialism can save humanity from this abyss. This is the truth. As the terrible war unfolds, this truth will be recognized by tens of millions who will not hear us now. The war-tortured masses will adopt our program and liberate the people of all countries from war and fascism. In this dark hour we clearly see the socialist future and prepare the way for it. Against the mad chorus of national hatreds we advance once more the old slogan of socialist internationalism: Workers of the World Unite!

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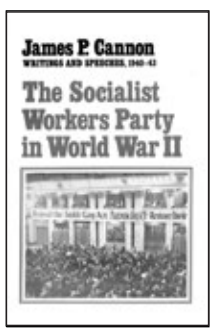

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— GREAT SOCIETY

The sane society—The University Medical Center in Southern Nevada—also the site of Las Vegas—is gripped by a budget crisis swelling at the rate of $2 million a month. The chief honcho has jumped ship.

Harry Ring

It's the only hospital in a 10,000-square-mile area with a trauma center—which treats severe burns and other critical needs.

As we were saying—Marion County, Illinois, will help plug a $1.2 million shortfall by axing employee health insurance. Officials attributed the situation to the escalating cost of insurance fees, and the high cost of housing prisoners elsewhere.

...meanwhile—Hamilton, Ohio, residents are being asked to chip in to finance a $400,000 sculpture of Prez Bush at the local high school. A year ago he went there to sign a bill that would increase, allegedly, funding for education and, also, "accountability."

Science for the masses—Apart from racial bias and other political faults, the census each decade can provide some useful data. The report for 2000 is available on four CDs. $895. The long-form, $1,595.

Royal shaft—Classy New York restaurants are competing to offer the most expensive hamburger. The winner seems to be the DB Bistro Moderne. Chomp on its Burger Royale, $50 (Freshly shaved French truffles, $21 extra). Chuck beef is added to the sirloin to give it some juice.

Slam dunk—With the disclosure of a 2002 net loss of $99 billion, America Online/Time Warner is taking its lumps. Investors are up in arms. Vice chairman Ted Turner left to try buffalo burgers. Observed top dog Richard Parsons: "2003 will be a challenging year."

Actually, he's consistent—Joseph Rice, mayor of Glendale, Colorado, and a major in the Army Psychological Operations reserve, was called up for active duty. According to the Denver *Post*, he "promoted peace" in Bosnia "by using television commercials, newspaper ads and pamphlets that asked people to turn in weapons and ammunition."

Let's not get coarse—"Many wonder now how many more surprises they can take. AOL has taken on the characteristics of a roach motel."—Wall Streeter Christopher Dixon.

Strike by New Jersey utility workers opposes long hours, benefit cuts

BY AMY HUSK

WESTFIELD, New Jersey—More than 100 members of Local 423 of the Utility Workers of America (UWUA) picketed in front of the corporate headquarters of the Elizabethtown Water Company here February 1–2.

Strike update: workers ratify new contract

The striking UWUA members ratified a new contract on February 3 by a 102–3 margin, reported the New Jersey *Star Ledger*. The three-year contract includes an annual 3 percent pay hike and improvements to medical and dental plans. Kevin Maloney, the president of Local 423, told the paper that the company had withdrawn "all of its strike-related demands."

Some of the unionists joined the picket line after being part of early morning mobile squads at locations around New Jersey where maintenance work is done by the union members. Others were dispatched following a four-hour mass picket. The union is organizing 24-hour picketing at a number of locations in the area.

The 234 workers walked off the job after their four-year contract expired January 31 and the bosses refused to withdraw their concession demands. The company's proposals include a reduction in hospitalization coverage, a cut in sick pay to 80 percent from the current 100 percent of workers' wages, and a mandatory on call status for work 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The bosses also demand that workers now be licensed to perform jobs that they have been performing for years.

Andy Castaldo, who has worked at the water company almost 23 years and is on one of the road maintenance crews, said, "We're working round the clock sometimes. I think I've only seen my wife for a few hours in the last two weeks." He and others said that the company had refused to hire more workers, because it was cheaper for them to force current employees to work long hours.

The union's chief negotiator, David Davis, said that the company refused to make an offer on wages and did not respond to the union's proposals on wage increases.

Workers at the water company are responsible for treating the water supply for more than 1 million people in New Jersey. They also maintain and fix leaks in the water pipes, a busy job with the unusually cold weather recently. Many of the unionists walking the picket line said they had been working grueling shifts trying to keep up with the problems associated with leaks in the pipes and icy conditions.

The coffee shop across the street from the plant displays huge pro-strike signs in its windows.

Militant/Ved Dookhun

Members of Local 423 of the Utility Workers of America walk picket line at corporate headquarters of Elizabethtown Water Company in early February.

Pro-boss settlement imposed at Vancouver port

BY JOE YOUNG

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—An arbitrator appointed with the agreement of both union officials and bosses has handed down a pro-company ruling in the dispute involving grain handlers at the port of Vancouver. One-third of the workers had voted against accepting binding arbitration.

The December 14 agreement to appoint the arbitrator ended the five-month lockout of 650 workers, who are members of Local 333 of the Grain Workers Union (GWU). The company shut the gates on August 25 when the workers refused to accept concessions in work hours and recall rights.

In locking the workers out last year, the bosses took advantage of a slack period to push for concessions. Behind the decline in shipping flows at the time was a drought on the Prairies that cut into the usual wheat volumes to be shipped.

The company was helped every step of the way by the government and the courts.

During the dispute grain was shipped through the port of Prince Rupert. The 85 unionists there signed a four-year contract November 20 without the concessions that have been imposed in Vancouver.

In September unionists from Vancouver put up pickets at the Prince Rupert terminal to stop the flow of grain. Within two days the companies got an injunction to bar pickets.

The British Columbia Court of Appeal overturned this injunction and pickets went up again November 7. But the Canadian Industrial Relations Board declared the pickets an illegal strike, ruling that if the union members in Prince Rupert refused to cross the picket lines they would face fines of $1,000 a day. The union in Vancouver lifted the pickets after a few days.

In January the arbitrator, Vince Ready, ruled in the bosses' favor on all major issues in dispute. The four-year contract will impose a six-day-on, three-day-off work schedule with 10-hour shifts. The union says this will eliminate 20 percent of the workforce.

Ready also eliminated the workers' lifetime right of recall—another demand of the bosses in an industry where layoffs are common in the context of seasonal ups and downs. Effective January 1, 2005, employees with less than 10 years of service prior to layoff will retain recall rights for 12 months. Those with more than 10 years will retain recall rights for twice that period.

Many will lose their recall rights because of the long layoffs in this industry. GWU members report that only a few workers have been called back to the job, as grain continues to move through Prince Rupert .

Joe Young is a meat packer in Langley, British Columbia.

From Pathfinder

CUBA and the Coming American Revolution by Jack Barnes

There will be a victorious revolution in the United States before a victorious counterrevolution in Cuba

— *Fidel Castro, March 1961*

Cuba and the Coming American Revolution is about the struggles of working people in the imperialist heartland, the youth who are attracted to them, and the example set by the people of Cuba that revolution is not only necessary—it can be made. Preface by Mary-Alice Waters. ***In English, Spanish, and French.*** **$13**

Order now from www.pathfinderpress.com. Please include $3 for shipping and handling. Also available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO

25 CENTS

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

February 24, 1978

In the course of Washington's attempt to smear the government of Vietnam with charges of espionage, President Carter authorized television surveillance of Ronald Humphrey without a court warrant. The government charges that Humphrey, an American citizen, was involved in the alleged spy ring.

Carter deliberately put himself above the Bill of Right's protection from unwarranted search. Administration officials considered the Vietnam case "an ideal vehicle for reasserting executive power on several counts," according to the *New York Times*.

The Democrat who campaigned on a platform of open government resorted to the same methods that his predecessors used against anti-Vietnam War protesters and other political dissenters.

The Justice Department explained, "Every President since Franklin Delano Roosevelt has asserted the power...." And just like every president since Roosevelt, Carter defended the illegal electronic surveillance in the name of "national security."

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

February 23, 1953

Hardly a week goes by without more murders and woundings of Korean and Chinese war prisoners in U.S. prison camps. A steady stream of massacres has been perpetrated against POWs confined behind barbed-wire in compounds on isolated, desolate islands off South Korea. The latest massacre resulted on Feb. 9 in death to five North Korean prisoners of war and injury to 19 on Koje Island. "There were no U.N. casualties," reported the Associated Press.

Col. C. C. Cadwell, U.S. commander of the prison camps, complained the killings followed a "deliberate attempt" by the "Communist prisoners" to carry out the plan to harass the U.N. command. They forced the camp commander to order their wounding and death with gas, concussion grenades, and bullets by "shouting Communist songs in violation of written orders."

These massacres, which have taken a toll of hundreds dead and more than 1,300 wounded, have been explained invariably as a diabolical Communist plot, engineered all the way from North Korea.

Opening guns of World War III

Working people should not mistake the heated exchanges between U.S. defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld and his counterparts in France and Germany as a mere war of words. Behind the quarrels over NATO's participation in the U.S.-led preparations for war, and over the role of the United Nations inspectors in Iraq, are the competing interests of major imperialist powers.

The positions taken by Berlin and France have everything to do with defending those interests and promoting their own position as imperialist powers, and nothing to do with holding back the drive to an invasion. The rulers of the two European powers are for an assault on Iraq; what they are against is the domination of the coming war by Washington and—in a secondary role—London.

The stakes for them are the same as for the rulers of those countries: a chance to get a bigger share of the oil reserves in the Middle East and to establish themselves on a firmer footing as regionwide exploiters.

Of the two European powers, it is Paris which wields the greater military clout. With an ocean-going navy and nuclear weapons the French government is one of three imperialist powers with an international military reach.

For their part, the German rulers are probing to develop their military potential and overcome the obstacles imposed by their position as the losing protagonist in World War II. In spite of their economic weight, however, they are handicapped also by the stagnant condition of their economy.

For the rulers of the United States, who have blood in their mouths at the present time, France and Germany represent—in Rumsfeld's words—"Old Europe," standing in contrast to "New Europe"—the United Kingdom, southern Europe, and the countries now knocking on the door of the European Union.

This is not the first time these exploiters have fallen out in the postwar period. But the tensions of today are evolving amidst the onset of a worldwide economic depression which spurs competition at every level, including among the imperialist giants.

These events provide confirmation of the lessons about the first Gulf war that are spelled out in "Opening Guns of World War III" and other articles in *New International* no. 7. That "assault against Iraq," wrote Jack Barnes in that volume, "was the first of Washington's wars since World War II in which it sought to use its military might to deal blows, indirect but palpable, to U.S. imperialism's rivals, especially in Bonn, Tokyo, and Paris. The Gulf War exacerbated the conflicts and divisions between Washington and its imperialist competitors, as well as between those rival powers themselves."

Studying this and other issues of this Marxist magazine helps prepare for the Iraq war and the wars that will follow. Readers will also not want to miss the 12th and latest issue of *New International,* advertised on the front page. Its title, "Capitalism's Long Hot Winter Has Begun," captures the essence of this period.

These titles explain concretely and in light of fast-developing events that while working people bear the brunt of the crises and wars of capitalism, they do not enter this period simply as cannon fodder in the economic and shooting wars of the capitalists. They have proven many times that they can also make history, by taking the Cuban road and the road of the Russian Revolution and overthrowing the rule of the exploiters.

U.S. hands off north Korea!

Long-range nuclear-capable bombers in Guam and deployment of more troops to the southern half of the Korean peninsula underscore the need for working people to oppose the U.S. rulers' military threats against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

With bipartisan support, White House officials have attempted to justify their actions by depicting Pyongyang as a nuclear-armed threat. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has smeared Pyongyang as a "terrorist regime."

One slander must ring particularly hollow to Korean working people is the claim that Pyongyang starves its people.

It is the U.S. rulers who are today using food as an instrument of their hostility toward the north, as they withhold promised grain shipments and pressure Tokyo and Seoul to do the same. This is consistent with their past opposition to progress made by working people in the DPRK, including the land reform which broke the grip of rapacious landlords.

Why such hostility toward north Korea?

Washington's stance reflects the class antagonisms between imperialism and the north Korean workers state. The tiny minority of billionaire families who rule the United States cannot reconcile themselves with the defeat inflicted on them by Korean workers and peasants, who made a revolution and overturned capitalist property relations in the north. In response, the U.S. rulers organized a bloody war against Korea that killed up to 4 million people and devastated cities and factories.

Although U.S imperialism lost, they kept troops there to reinforce division, and to oppose reunification. Washington, however, is facing more opposition from working people and youth in south Korea who—contrary to myth—don't see U.S. troops as their "protectors." This rising sentiment was seen in the recent large demonstrations sparked by the acquittal of U.S. soldiers whose vehicle ran over and killed two Korean schoolgirls.

These and other manifestations of the growing desire for reunification among broader layers of Koreans across the peninsula help to strengthen the north Korean workers state in the face of U.S. military threats and give its workers and peasants confidence that they can resist and win solidarity across the DMZ.

Working people around the world need to defend north Korea's assertion of its sovereignty and champion the reunification of the Korean people. We can deal a blow to the warmongers by extending a hand of solidarity to demand:

Imperialist hands off north Korea!

U.S. troops out of south Korea!

U.S. AIDS plan: a profit scheme

Much has been made in the big-business media of President Bush's so-called "Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief," announced in his recent State of the Union address.

Bush described the plan as an initiative to lead the world against a "plague of nature." But the legacy of imperialist plunder and capitalist underdevelopment—not nature—is behind the pandemic unfolding in Africa, along with other regions of the world.

The exploitation of the continent for profit, from the slave trade, through the colonial era, to the "modern" extraction of wealth through the channels of investment, debt, and trade is responsible for the crisis that exists today throughout much of the continent.

Near the close of the 20th century the combined Gross Domestic Product of the nations south of the Sahara was equivalent to one-fifth that of France. Half the population of 600 million lived on less than $1 a day; more than half had no access to potable water; and more than a third could not get health care. Ninety out of every 1,000 children died before they reached the age of five.

These conditions are reinforced by the tribute that the African peoples must pay to Wall Street in the form of loan repayments and interest. The debt of African governments to imperialist banks stands at over $300 billion.

For decades pharmaceutical companies in the imperialist countries have used their patents to exact superprofits for the life-prolonging anti-retroviral AIDS drugs—pricing them beyond the reach of millions of Africans.

Bush's "AIDS relief" package is designed to help smooth the path of the U.S. rulers as they push their trade and investment interests in Africa—frequently at the expense of other, longer-established imperialist powers. Even the way it is put together smacks of imperial arrogance. Washington has already determined who will administer the funds, what are the priorities, and which are the drug companies that will benefit from the funds.

In a June 2001 speech to the United Nations General Assembly, Cuban vice-president Carlos Lage gave an example for working people of the spirit of solidarity needed to seriously tackle the AIDS crisis. Despite its limited resources Cuba offered volunteer doctors, healthcare workers, and medicines.

Lage called on the UN conference to declare an end to patents for AIDS drugs and provide them free to all who need them.

The Cuban leader urged the assembled governments to demand cancellation of the debt of semicolonial countries owed to the imperialist banks. That is a stand that points the way forward for working people around the globe who want to join forces in an international battle against the plague of imperialist exploitation.

PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

This is a three-week issue of the *Militant*. The paper will not publish the last two weeks in February as staff members help organize and carry out the move of the editorial offices to a new location in New York. The next issue, no. 8, dated March 17, will be published on Tuesday, March 4.

Why defend affirmative action plans?

BY PETER THIERJUNG

In this week's *Letters* column, Chuck Wolfsfeld writes that affirmative action "will only change the race or gender of those unemployed." The only solution to unemployment, he adds, is socialism.

Wolfsfeld is right to see the fight for jobs under the slogan of "jobs for all" as a key one for working people today. The labor movement needs to advance demands for government-funded public works programs and a shorter workweek with no cut in pay to spread the available work around.

Affirmative action is not a diversion from this fight, but a front in it. Because of discrimination, women, Blacks, and other oppressed nationalities are hit hardest by layoffs. They are the "last hired, first fired."

The bosses use divisions along race and sex lines among working people to drag down the wages and working conditions of all workers and to sap the ability of the working class to come together as one in a fight against them. Affirmative action is a way for the labor movement to overcome divisions along race and sex lines fostered by capitalism.

REPLY TO A READER

The labor movement needs to demand quotas in hiring. During layoffs, dual seniority lists would protect those most vulnerable to the capitalist crisis. We should not allow the bosses to use seniority—first won by the unions to protect workers against arbitrary layoffs—to pit us against each other on the basis of race or sex.

This stance on affirmative action helps us answer the politics of resentment promoted by capitalist politicians and played on by ultrarightists to divert our focus from the real problem: the bosses and their capitalist system. That's why affirmative action is a target today by the bosses.

By championing the fight to defend and extend affirmative action, the unions will draw more workers from oppressed nationalities, along with women, into their ranks and leadership. The result will be a stronger, more unified labor movement—one that is seen as an ally by all the oppressed and a bulwark for all progressive struggles.

Out of such struggles, the working class will forge a movement that will ultimately be capable of taking power away from the ruling billionaire families and establishing a workers and farmers government. The working class will then be able to join in the worldwide fight for socialism—a fight that will not only uproot racism and sexism, but redress the inequalities imposed on the world's oppressed by U.S. imperialism.

The Young Socialists and Socialist Workers Party invite you to join in a weekend of campaigning against imperialism and its wars. Come to an Open House in New York or San Francisco after the demonstration.

San Francisco

Sunday February 16 at 4 p.m.

Friends Meeting House
65-9th St. (near Market)
Call (415) 584-0826

New York

Saturday February 15

¨Open House/chili dinner following demonstration with discussion:

"The war abroad and the war at home: the revolutionary struggle against imperialism"

speakers include:

Róger Calero Associate editor of *Perspectiva Mundial*, staff writer for *the Militant*, currently fighting INS efforts to deport him.

Ma'mud Shirvani Farsi-language editor of Pathfinder Press

Romina Green, member of the Young Socialists executive

For time and place call (212) 695-7358 or e-mail youngsocialists@attglobal.net

CORRECTIONS

In the article "Socialists defend right to campaign in elections" in the February 17 *Militant*, an appeal for contributions listed a Post Office box that is no longer in service. The correct address is: Socialist Workers National Campaign Committee, P.O. Box 14239, St. Paul, MN 55114.

Striking firefighters march in Scotland

Continued from front page
(UK). They were followed by smaller contingents from a number of other unions carrying banners.

"We are in this for the long haul now," said Martin Poynter, a firefighter from Newport and chairperson of the FBU branch there. Despite the snow that had closed airports in southern England the previous day, he had come with a delegation from the Isle of Wight. The small, largely rural island off the southwest coast of England is about as far from Glasgow as you can be and remain in the United Kingdom.

Poynter explained that Newport has the only full-time fire station on the island. The other nine fire stations are staffed by retained, or part-time, firefighters who are called out to fires from their jobs or homes. "Two of these stations would be closed" if the proposals of the Bain commission, a body set up by the government to review fire services, are implemented, he said.

Newport is the only fire station in the UK where the firefighters are locked out of the station during strikes, Poynter said. "We have been told that if we try to enter to get appliances to respond to life-threatening incidents, we will be prosecuted for 'breaking and entering,'" he said. "A private security firm has been employed to check the fire station every three hours during a strike. This costs £400 ($650) for every 24 hours. But the support we've had is overwhelming."

Marchers passed out explanatory leaflets and a special FBU newspaper among the Saturday shopping crowds. Many young people also took red and yellow FBU flags and could be seen later in the day still carrying them around the city center.

The February 1-2 strike was the latest in a series of firefighters' stoppages that started in November. The walkout followed in quick succession from a similar strike beginning January 28. On that day, picket lines received noisy support from passing motorists. In Bathgate, striking firefighters reported that local lorry (truck) drivers would turn back and return with fire wood if they passed and saw the stockpile for the picket line brazier was running low.

At some fire stations, the striking firefighters organized to hand out leaflets in local shopping centers. As in previous stoppages, some 19,000 armed forces personnel were mobilized as strikebreakers, operating their own fleet of fire trucks.

On February 3, talks took place between the FBU, the local authority employers, and Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott. Prescott had previously reiterated his determination to implement the proposals of the Bain Commission. He also announced his intention of repealing section 19 of the 1947 Fire Services Act in order to impose a settlement on the FBU, a legislative proposal which was rejected by the Scottish parliament.

After this, the Trades Union Congress—the national union federation—intervened through its Contact Group of union General Secretaries, seeking a way to reopen negotiations.

After a meeting of the union's Executive Council that followed the negotiations, FBU General Secretary Andy Gilchrist announced that no further strike dates will be set at this stage. Talks at ACAS (the Arbitration and Conciliation Service) will begin on February 10 for a period of 4 weeks. The union has plans for regular national meetings and is planning to recall its annual conference on March 19.

West Coast dockworkers approve new contract

BY BILL KALMAN

SAN FRANCISCO—Members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) on the West Coast approved a new contract by 90 percent, union officials reported January 22. Almost 7,500 members voted in favor and 888 opposed.

The new contract with the bosses' organization, the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA), took effect February 1. The six-year agreement will increase wages an average of between 7 and 8 per cent for longshore workers and clerks, increase pensions by an average of 58 percent, and maintains health insurance coverage.

PMA president Joseph Miniace said the contract fitted an "era of modernization." The PMA's main goal since the previous contract expired in July has been to increase labor productivity through the use of new technology.

The contract allows the PMA to use new computerized tracking systems which will result in 400 to 600 positions being eliminated.

The contract negotiations were the source of a confrontation last summer. West Coast dockworkers staged a number of rallies last summer involving other unions.

Longshore workers insisted that a West Coast-wide contract be maintained, along with the union hiring hall where work assignments are made. The terminal and shipping bosses responded to the workers' stance by going on a campaign to force ILWU members to work faster, which the workers resisted by working to safety rules.

The PMA locked out the workers for 10 days last September and October. More than 125 cargo ships were left stranded along the Pacific Coast, setting the stage for the Bush administration to step in under the Taft-Hartley Act to reopen the ports October 8 under the old contract.

Hundreds of dockworkers rallied in San Francisco to oppose bosses' contract proposals in July 2002.

Federal government mediators, along with AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard Trumka, worked out a compromise agreement. A tentative contract was announced on November 23, and the ILWU longshore caucus approved the proposal going to the membership on December 12.

Federal mediator Peter Hurtgen said at a November 24 press conference that the proposal will make the ports more efficient. While some jobs will be lost, the agreement allows the union to retain its traditional jurisdiction in the jobs as changed.

The *Los Angeles Times* noted that "union jurisdiction over jobs related to the new technology may continue to be a sore point."

Cargo loaded and unloaded at West Coast ports is predicted to double over the next decade, setting the stage for further attempts by the PMA to increase longshore productivity in order to bolster their profits.

"The question is how much more will we be prepared six years from now," Richard Washington, a member of Local 10 who opposed the length of the contract, told the *Militant*. "The PMA will build up all kinds of pressure against us. We have to stand up and face the tough times ahead—that's how you build leadership."

Bill Kalman is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 120 in San Lorenzo, California.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

ALABAMA
Birmingham

How Cuba Uprooted Race Discrimination., Speaker: Brian Taylor, Socialist Workers Party, Fri., Feb. 28., Program 7:30 p.m.*;* Dinner, 6 p.m. *3029-A Bessemer Rd., Donation: Program $4. Dinner $5., Students and unemployed $2., Tel: (205) 780-0021.*

CALIFORNIA
Los Angeles

The Rise and Fall of Radical Reconstruction. Speaker: Frank Forrestal, Socialist Workers Party, Fri. Feb. 21. 7:30 p.m., *4229 S. Central Ave., Donation: $5; Tel:(323)233-9372.*

San Francisco

Malcolm X and His Ideas; How imperialism underdeveloped Africa. Speaker: Bill Kalman, Socialist Workers Party, Fri. Feb. 21. 7:30 p.m.

Defend Affirmative Action! Why Working People Should Support Affirmative Action Backed Up with Quotas. Fri., Feb., 28. 7:30 p.m. *3926 Mission St. Tel:(415)584-2135.*

FLORIDA
Tampa

Oppose U.S. Threats Against North Korea. Speaker: James Harris, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Feb. 22. Program, 7:30 p.m.; *1441 E. Fletcher Ave. Suite 421. (813)910-8507.*

ILLINOIS
Chicago

The War on Iraq: Oppose U.S. Rulers' Two-front War on Working People. Speaker: Joel Britton, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Feb. 22. Program, 7:30 p.m.; dinner, 6:30 p.m. *2901 W. 59th St.. Tel: (973) 481-0077.*

NEW YORK
Manhattan

Film and discussion: The Murder of Emmett Till. Speaker: Ruth Robinett, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Feb. 14. Program, 7:30 p.m., *545 Eighth Ave. Donation $5, Tel: (212) 695-7358.*

NORTH CAROLINA
Charlotte

Oppose U.S. Imperialist War Against Iraq. Sat. Mar. 1., 7 p.m. *2001A N. Cannon Blvd. Kannapolis, NC; Tel: (212) 695-7358.*

PENNSYLVANIA
Pittsburgh

Oppose Police Violence—Jail Killer Cops! Speakers: Renee Wilson, Vicky Thompson, People Against Police Violence, others., Sat. Feb. 22, 7:30 p.m.

Celebrate the Publication of *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*. Fri. Feb. 28, 7:30 p.m. *5907 Penn Ave., Suite 225. Donation: $4. Tel. (412)365-1090.*

— CALENDAR —

ILLINOIS
Chicago

Fund-raising Dinner to Stop the Deportation of Róger Calero. Sat., Mar. 1. Program, 6 p.m. *Casa Juan Diego Youth Center, 2020 S. Blue Island. For more information call: (773) 368-0290.*

WASHINGTON
Yakima Valley

Stop the Deportation of Róger Calero Speakers: Róger Calero, others, Fri. Feb. 21, 6 p.m. *Western Council of Industrial Workers union hall, 712 N. 7th St. For more information call: (509)454-8370.*

Seattle

Stop the Deportation of Róger Calero Speakers: Róger Calero, others, Sat. Feb. 22, Program 6 p.m., Reception 5 p.m. *Bethany United Church of Christ, 6230 Beacon Avenue South, For more information call: (206)729-5419.*

— LETTERS —

On affirmative action

As companies continue to downsize through automation, unemployment will continue to grow.

The only solution to this problem is to replace capitalism with socialism, where new machinery will mean less hours per person with no reduction in pay. Through this, everybody who wants a job will have a job, regardless of race, religion, nationality, or gender.

Affirmative action will not lead us closer to socialism, but will only change the race or gender of those unemployed. Everybody should be hired. Nobody should be laid off. Universities and colleges should have open admissions.

Chuck Wolsfeld
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The source of value

I appreciated Patrick O'Neill's article in the *Militant* January 27, on the shift to gold holdings as a store of value, a measure of the gathering depression.

It is useful to make a clarification on one central phrase ambiguously used by O'Neill. The article says that gold's value is "derived from the labor power involved in mining and processing it."

"Labor power" is the term Karl Marx and Frederick Engels developed for the worker's capacity to labor, as distinct from the actual labor performed for the capitalist. Labor power is the *commodity sold in advance* by the worker on the market in exchange for wages paid *after* the actual labor has been performed.

Labor power, the living labor potential of working people in capitalist society, is the one commodity that has the peculiar characteristic of being able to produce more than its own value. Looked at in advance, labor power is the one commodity that can both reproduce its own value and create new value. But the new value, a good portion of which is surplus value, is only produced in the labor process as labor power is consumed by capital as living labor.

The value of the commodity (in this case gold) is "derived," strictly speaking, not from labor power but—to use Marx's words—"the amount of labor, the labor-time socially necessary for its production."

Marx's explanation of the origins of value-and therefore surplus-value-under capitalism was, and remains, scientifically unchallengeable. From this flows the revolutionary conclusion of *Capital*—the need to "expropriate the expropriators."

Ron Poulsen
Sydney, Australia

East Timor

A couple of points on the East Timor article in the January 20 *Militant*.

The map accompanying the article labeled West Papua as Irian Jaya, which is the Indonesian annexationist name. West Papua is the name used by the indigenous popular independence movement. The Indonesian government itself has now changed the official name of the province to West Papua. The article was edited to say that East Timor was "located east of Indonesia", which is not exactly true—it is west of quite a bit of Indonesia.

Also, the subheading that reads, "cops from the colonial regime" at the end of the article is a problem.

Is describing the Indonesian occupation as a "colonial regime" appropriate for an invasion and occupation (backed by imperialism) by one semi-colonial country [Indonesia] of another [East Timor]? The term that is used in the article, which refers to "cops from the time of the Indonesia occupation regime," is more accurate.

Bob Aiken
Sydney, Australia

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people.

Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

THE MILITANT

Marchers in Derry mark anniversary of Bloody Sunday

BY CAROL BALL

DERRY, Northern Ireland—Some 10,000 people marched here February 2 through hail and snow to demand justice for those killed in January 1972 when British paratroopers opened fire on a civil rights demonstration in the city, killing 14.

The 1972 march had been called to oppose the internment without trial of thousands of civil rights and republican activists by Britain in August 1971. For three decades, campaigners against British rule in the north have fought for the perpetrators of the massacre—including those who gave the orders—be brought to account.

The February 2 march retraced the steps of the protest 31 years ago. Family members of those killed formed the first rank, each carrying a named cross. Groups from all over Ireland joined the protest, some carrying banners from Sinn Fein, the leadership of the fight for a united Ireland, and its youth organization, as well as the Palestine Solidarity Committee. Some carried torches bearing the names of state massacres around the world with the numbers who died. "We are showing our solidarity with them," said John Kelly of the Bloody Sunday Justice Campaign, representing families of those killed.

As the march wound down through the houses of the Creggan and Bogside areas, working people lined the route and joined the protest, making up the bulk of the marchers.

Noting the many young participants, Paul O'Neill from New Lodge in Belfast told the *Militant* that "things are never going back to the way they were before, that's why they're here."

The march ended in a rally at Free Derry Corner in Derry's Bogside area. Speakers included Michael McKinney of the Bloody Sunday Justice Campaign; Gerry Adams and Martin McGuiness of Sinn Fein; Mark Durkan of the Social Democratic and Labour Party; and Minty Thompson of the Open the Files campaign.

"We will have an accounting for the actions of the British state on our streets," said Michael McKinney in his report on the current British government inquiry into the 1972 events. Senior British political and military figures are being allowed to evade questioning at the inquiry sessions, he said.

Adams criticized the British government's "resistance to change," referring to its foot-dragging in response to demands to reveal the truth about Bloody Sunday, and its suspension of the Northern Ireland Assembly on the grounds that the Irish Republican Army had not surrendered all its weapons. "There is no way that the status quo that used to exist can ever be brought back," he said. "The people murdered on Bloody Sunday were part of a risen people," Martin McGuinness of Sinn Fein had said earlier.

The "Open the Files" campaign, said Thompson, aims to tear down London's cover-up of other British Army actions. "My mother was shot in the garden of our house," Thompson said. "Afterwards we got nothing but lies. We say open the files, unlock the truth!"

Militant/Julie Crawford

Some 10,000 people marched in Derry, Northern Ireland, February 2 demanding justice for the 14 people killed in 1972 when British troops fired on civil rights demonstration.

Bloody Sunday inquiry

In the face of ongoing protests, London was forced to open a new inquiry in 1998. A 1972 inquiry that exonerated the military was discredited by the determined international campaign for the truth led by family members of those killed.

The new inquiry moved to London in September to hear British political and military witnesses, after holding sessions in Derry for two years.

"We didn't want it here; it's their territory. They hoped we'd go away but they didn't reckon on the type of people we are," said Kay Duddy, whose brother Jack was among the 14 killed. "We are going to get the truth."

The testifying of Sir Edward Heath, the British prime minister at the time of the massacre, was a victory for the campaign. Heath claimed ignorance of the buildup to the bloodletting, including of preparations to send the paratroop regiment involved.

John Kelly said, "We want an admitting of the truth, but the hardest part is pinning the blame on those really responsible."

Workers in struggle join Ontario rally

BY JOHN STEELE

STEVENSVILLE, Ontario—One hundred and fifty workers who are either locked out or on strike in a number of union struggles in the Niagara area of southern Ontario turned out for a rally here February 1.

There have been nine strikes and lockouts in the Niagara area in the last year.

The action was held outside the office of the local Conservative Party member of the provincial parliament. Organizers declared opposition to Bill 7, a measure passed in 1995 that—along with attacks on government worker's rights—gave legal blessing to the bosses' use of scabs by overturning "anti-scab" legislation of the previous New Democratic Party (NDP) government.

The NDP is a social democratic party linked to the Canadian Labour Congress, the main cross-Canada union federation. Peter Kormos, the NDP member of the provincial parliament from Niagara Centre, was one of the featured speakers.

The rally was organized by the St. Catherines and District Labour Council and Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) Local 199. The local organizes workers at Ronal Canada in Stevensville who have been locked out since October 31. Others participating in the labor action were International Association of Machinists (IAM) Locals 171 and 939, on strike against Fleet Industries plant in Fort Erie; and striking Niagara Motors workers who are also members of CAW Local 199.

Members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) at Washington Mills who have been on strike for 18 months also attended, along with members of the Teamsters who recently organized a union at a Niagara Falls hotel.

"We will not allow scabs into the plant," IAM local 171 president Julius Antal, representing the Fleet strikers at Fort Erie, told the rally. The Machinists rejected the bosses' proposal that demanded "the right to recall employees out of seniority based on the company's need, as determined by the company."

To date the Fort Erie workers' picket line has prevented the aerospace company from moving in replacement workers. A court injunction obtained by the bosses now limits their ability to hold traffic going into the plant to 10 minutes.

"They don't treat us with respect, they treat us like animals," said Fleet storekeeper Ovide Lorrin, who has worked 37 years at the plant. Striker Beverly Schneider said that she had received two "termination" notices in the mail—one of the intimidation tactics of the company.

Dan Petrie, a Washington Mills striker, spoke to the crowd. He and the other strikers at the plant that produces abrasives are members of USWA Local 4151. The bosses in the Niagara area "are waging war on us," he said. "They are trying to decisively weaken organized labor in this area and across Canada."

A spokesperson for the workers locked-out at Ronal Canada also addressed the rally. Thirty-seven of the 103 workers at the plant, which is a major supplier of wheels to the auto industry, were locked out October 31. Two days earlier the company had laid off the other 66 workers. The bosses are demanding a 30 percent cut in wages and benefits, along with other concessions.

On March 15 the workers are holding a St. Patrick's Day fund-raising dance at the CAW hall in St. Catherines. Phone (905) 641-1646 for information.

John Steele is a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers.

Militant/John Steele

Locked-out members of Canadian Auto Workers Local 199 on picket line against Ronal Canada. Bosses are demanding cuts in wages and benefits and other concessions.

U.S. Navy continues Vieques exercises

BY RÓGER CALERO

The destroyer USS *Stout*, which is part of the naval battle group of the aircraft carrier USS *Enterprise,* began bombing exercises February 4 off the Puerto Rican island of Vieques. The news came just hours after the Navy had announced that the previous military maneuvers led by the aircraft carrier USS *Theodore Roosevelt* had been completed.

Residents of the island reported that they heard explosions for more than two hours.

According to U.S. Navy officials, the *Roosevelt* has been dispatched to the Mediterranean Sea to join Washington's military operations in Afghanistan by mid-February.

Although the Navy has not officially announced a new round of exercises, several other ships from the *Enterprise* battle group have participated in target practice.

Faced with ongoing opposition to the naval, air, and amphibious operations, U.S. Navy officials in January announced that they will stop bombing practice on the Puerto Rican island in May, and said they had found other bombing ranges in the United States.

For years the U.S. military had argued that there were no suitable alternative sites for these exercises.

Kim Dixon, a spokesperson for the U.S. Navy in Vieques, said, "The bombing range will remain open until May 1." Leaving open the possibility for extending its stay, Dixon hinted that this could change "if Washington decides it is necessary for its coming war in Iraq," the New York-based *Hoy* newspaper reported February 6.

Meanwhile, activists arrested during protests against the Navy's presence in Vieques have been handed stiff sentences and fines by U.S. courts, ranging from five weeks to nearly five months.

Since the opening of the last military exercises on January 13, at least 19 people have been arrested for participating in acts of civil disobedience and other protests.